Saturday Review

JANUARY 29, 1955 / 20¢

RECORDINGS

ROM "AMELIA"
O "THE SAINT"
y Irving Kolodin

HOREAU ON
ADISON AVENUE
y Joseph Wood Krutch

HE DAMP ART OF
OVIESELLING
y Arthur Knight

Carl Carmer, author of
"The Susquehanna."
(See Page 11)

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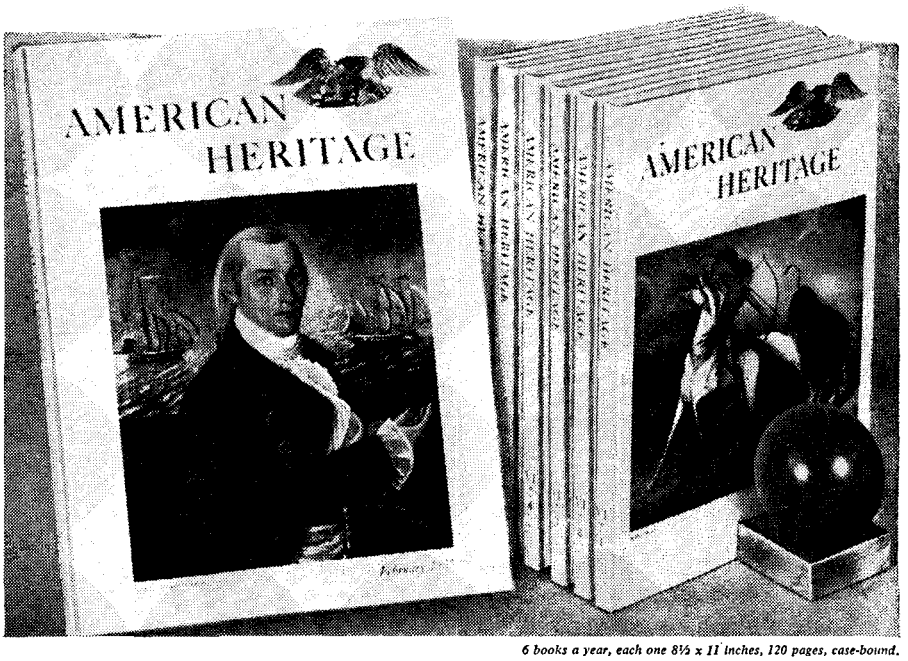

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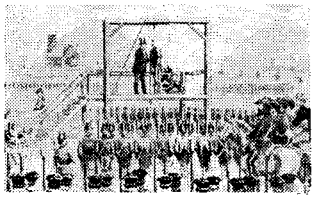

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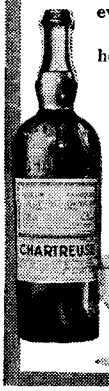

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TRADE Winds

FROM THE RIGHT-HAND DRAWER

WHEN THE AUGUST judges of the Book-of-the-Month Club nominated Jim Bishop's "The Day Lincoln Was Shot" for future distribution the elated author sent notes to a half-dozen publishers who had rejected the manuscript, urging them to look up a certain quotation in the Bible. Those who bothered to consult the paragraph referred to found that the quotation was, "O ye of little faith. . . ." George

Brockway replied with another quote from the Bible: "And they who mourn shall be comforted." . . . *The New York Times Book Review* is circulating a memorable dictum from the works of the Danish scholar Thomas Bartholin (1616-1680): "Without books God is silent, justice dormant, natural science at a stand, philosophy lame, letters dumb, and all things in Cimmerian darkness." . . . A more contemporary savant—ye ed of *The Saturday Review* in fact—has this to say in the *ALA Bulletin*: "The library is not a shrine for the worship of books. It is not a temple where literary incense must be burned or where one's devotion to the bound book is expressed in ritual. A library, to modify the famous metaphor of Socrates, should be the delivery room for the birth of ideas—a place where history comes to life."

PROFESSOR KEVIN GUINAGH, of the University of Illinois, was reconciled to a $500 fee for a four-year job retranslating Virgil's "Aeneid"—until his wife won $1,000 in a slogan contest. Now Professor Guinagh vows there will be no more bookwriting in his life—unless it involves "only twenty-five words or less." . . . George Oppenheimer, formerly of Viking, is the new drama critic of Alicia Patterson's bustling *Newsday*. With Arthur Kober he has also collaborated on a new play called "A Mighty Man Is He" (it's about a fellow named Smith) that will be produced by Walter Fried in th fall.

IRVING STONE AND RICHARD ARMOUR s side by side recently at a Book ar Author luncheon in Los Angeles. A mour noted that while three of Stone novels were being offered handsome boxed together, his own "Light A mour" was displayed in solitary grar deur. He thereupon passed this no to Stone:

> The books of Irving Stone are boxed,
> Look fine upon the shelf.
> Some day, perhaps at Shadow Lawn,
> I may be boxed myself.

C. M. CRIST SPOTTED a pile of copies Steve Fisher's new novel in a Seatt bookshop. " 'Giveaway!' " he quippe "I'll bet they can't even sell it!" The are, however. It's about the bedraggle folks who haunt daytime TV qu shows, hoping to be called on th stage where they may win a radio, a broiler, or an order for a new dres which they promptly peddle to a hus tler at the door of the studio for abou one-fifth its retail value. Producers the shows soon spot these "regulars and employ every stratagem to ba them from their programs. "Give away" has reminded some critics the late Nat West's "Day of the Lo cust," which dealt with another seg ment of the impoverished fringe thi haunts Hollywood.

SPEAKING OF TV STUDIOS, a recent com mercial called for a trayful of a ne brand of dog biscuits to be place before a ferocious looking terrie

while the announcer gushed, "Isn it a succulent dish? And watch ol Spot here go for it! He knows what packed with the rich vitamins an crunchy delights to keep him spry an

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ıealthy!" Old Spot, however, mortified he sponsor—and convulsed the au-lience—by taking one contemptuous ;niff of the biscuits and marching ıaughtily out of camera range. There vas a hasty council held, and one ınnouncer fired. The next evening ;ood old Spot devoured his biscuits at ı single gulp. For concealed in the niddle of every one of them was a hunk of the finest and most expensive ıeef steak on the market.

And in Station KNX-CBS, in Holly-vood, Jack Price told about the disc ockey who sent the front and rear ushions of his jalopy to be repaired ıne morning. The garage attendant eturned only the front cushion. His ·xplanation: "Brother, I don't take a ıack seat to nobody!"

ı GRAPHIC EXAMPLE of the retail book-eller's plight today is presented by he January 16 issue of *The New York Times Book Review.* A spread on ıages 18 and 19 proclaims, "Any 3 or only $3.95: Values up to $22." On ıage 21: "Your choice of 3 up to 20.25 retail value for only $3.98." On ıage 23: "Which 3 of these fine books lo you want for only $2? (value up o $25.95 in publishers' editions)." On

ıage 25 (phonograph records): "Reg-lar $12.50 value—all yours for only 1." On page 34: "Take any 3 of these ıooks (values up to $20) for only 2.95."

I have no magic formula to offer hat will put an end to this sort of ıractice. Book-club selections have ıeen the only things that have kept ıore than one publisher in the black ı recent years. The fact remains, .owever, that the position of the ook business is becoming steadily ıore precarious. Text and juvenile epartments are now depended upon ɔ overcome the deficits chalked up by ıe trade divisions. Nine out of ten rst novels lose substantial sums. Ninety out of a hundred volumes of oetry and essays do likewise. Even tandard non-fiction has become a ɔng-shot. What to do, what to do?

D BUCKLEY, MANAGER OF New York's Iotel Roosevelt, was approached re-ently by the wife of a prominent ublisher who asked him to donate he Grand Ballroom for a charity ance. Buckley explained to her that

Out-of-town convoy heads for the hurricane area.

Telephone Men and Supplies Were on the Way Before the Winds Died Down

Giant trees were uprooted and broken like match-sticks by winds of more than 100 miles an hour.

Carol, Edna and Hazel, as you may remember, were no ladies. They came raging in from the sea, to leave New England and eight eastern states reeling from wind and flood.

It was, as always, a challenge to the telephone companies. Local employees responded instantly. Companies in other states were quick to send help.

"The hurricane had not blown itself out," said one newspaper editorial, "before aid was on its way. Expert repair crews with their familiar green trucks hurried into the stricken communities with the dispatch of reserve army divisions rushing to stem an enemy breakthrough in a vital battle line."

Along with the will and the skill of telephone people to handle emergencies came the millions of miles of wire and the thousands of tons of equipment that were needed for the job. These were provided by Western Electric, the Bell System's manufacturing and supply unit.

One of the heart-warming things to us was the friendly understanding of the people in the hurricane areas. To them go the thanks of all the telephone men and women who took part in the work of restoration.

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this is the peak season for rental of such space, and that it would be impossible to give it to her free. "But this is such a worthy cause," she protested. "All these wonderful but penniless authors and their brood. . . ." Buckley again expressed regrets, then, remembering that she is mistress of a sumptuous estate in the suburbs, suggested that she hold the dance in her own house. "What?" was the lady's indignant rejoinder, "and have all those bums cluttering up my living room?" . . . W. A. Liddell accompanied

some other literary lights on a lobster-fishing expedition below Bar Harbor one day in early fall. It was a cloudless morning, and the ocean was glassy smooth, even two miles offshore. Gulls were paddling about, the old captain was in an expansive mood, and the brightly-colored buoys, marking the location of each fisherman's traps were clearly identifiable. After a while, however, the party was obliged to haul several traps while facing into the sun. The shadows cast by the buoys obscured their bright colors and the fisherman, confusing them with the birds floating on the water had to circle back several times to regain his bearings. "Jamie," said Liddell reprovingly, "if I didn't know you better I'd say your sea education had been sadly neglected. You can't seem to tell the gulls from the buoys!"

TIME WAS WHEN ONLY millionaires sneaked off to Florida and California as soon as the snow began to fly. Today everybody's doing it. There's the story, for instance, of a meeting that took place on the sands of Miami Beach between the wives of two rival book manufacturers. "I'm here for the whole winter," boasted one. "Four months solid in the bridal suite of the newest hotel! And you?" "Five weeks I'm afraid," was the answer, "is all I can spare for idling in the sun this year." "Tsk! Tsk!" clucked the first with a heavy sigh of sympathy. "So your husband's plant is shut down again?"

If you're interested, incidentally, in the rates of the newest Miami Beach hostelries, an author just returned therefrom advises, "Guess the highest you possibly can imagine—then add 25 per cent!" —BENNETT CERF.

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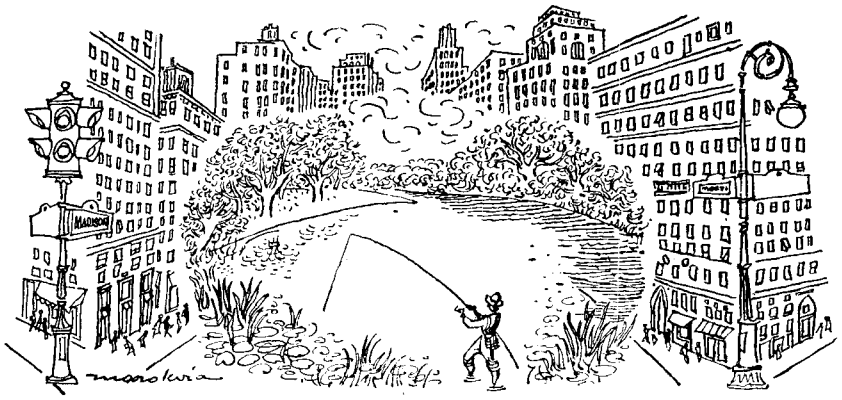
The Saturday Review

JANUARY 29, 1955



THOREAU ON MADISON AVENUE

By JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

Not long ago it was considered beneath a man to labor in the fields, subject to the cold and the sun; witty and ambitious boys flocked to the cities from their fathers' lands. Today neither his own psychiatrist nor modern playwrights, sociologists, or poets seem to be enthusiastic about the life of a city-dweller—the "luncher at 21" whose $30,000 a year presumably shackles him to an intolerable life. The team of Krutch-Thoreau is particularly sour on the subject of the Madison Avenue ethos. The Krutch side of this equation is, of course, Joseph Wood Krutch, critic, essayist, and dweller-in-the-desert, whose last book was "The Best of Two Worlds."

NOT long ago the shade of Henry David Thoreau visited me at midnight, as it occasionally does. As usual I broke the silence, but our conversation seems to me worth reporting.

ME: Well, Henry, this is an important day for you.

HENRY: I never knew a day that wasn't.

ME: The same old Henry, I see. I really should have anticipated that one. But I had something less transcendental in mind. I mean that it was just one hundred years ago that "Walden" was published.

HENRY: It was also just a hundred years ago today that I met in a bean field the plumpest woodchuck I ever saw. I didn't eat him, but I thought to myself that if I did eat meat I would want it to be some such savage meat as that.

ME *(dryly)*: I have read your "Journal." But you were a writer after all. You did hope for some readers—for rather more than it seemed likely you would ever get. How do you like being the author of an accepted classic?

HENRY: A classic is a work which everyone acknowledges the obligation to read and nobody thinks it necessary to take seriously. The New Testament is generally regarded as the most indispensable of classics. It is read every Sunday in churches and, occasionally, even in private. But if it were once actually heard by any congregation not a stone would be left standing of that church—or of any other.

ME: Oh! Come, come. It is generally admitted that your influence has been tremendous. Your writings are said to have been accepted as Bibles by many modern reformers, including the founders of the British Labor Party.

HENRY: And I have just reminded you how much influence Bibles really have.

ME: At least it must be a satisfaction to remember that your defense of John Brown carried some weight. And the slave was freed.

HENRY: From one of his masters, but not from himself. It is hard to have a Southern overseer; it is worse to have a Northern one; but worst of all when you are the slavedriver yourself. Abolition may possibly have

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"You know, Eldridge, since you elected yourself a champion of the cause of peaceful co-existence you've been impossible to live with!"

saved the souls of the masters in the other world; but I cannot see that it contributed much to saving the souls of the slaves in your world or the other. Nowadays they hope they will someday be regarded as "just as good as anybody else." I never heard of a less exalted ambition.

ME: Well, there's still the Labor Party, anyway. You were a kind of socialist. And all Labor Parties applaud when you say, "I cannot believe that our factory system is the best mode by which man can get clothing . . . since, as far as I have heard or observed, the principal object is, not that mankind may be well or honestly clad, but, unquestionably, that corporations may be enriched."

HENRY: Yes, indeed. And when I lived in Concord many of the neighbors who existed there with me picked and chose among the Gospel sayings. But they never took enough to change essentially their way of life. I never heard it maintained by any sensible man that anywhere in the United States life was lived as Jesus intended it should be. And I doubt that life in any socialist country would please me better. Where today are men any less exclusively concerned with getting and spending? What else does what they call "a higher standard of living" amount to? What necessities of the soul that money can't buy are they trying to attain? Where have they learned that what mankind needs to know is not how to be rich, but how to live well in poverty?

ME: Perhaps all that will come in time. One must begin somewhere.

HENRY: What I *do* know is that one must not begin at the wrong end. One should put first things first.

ME: What *is* the right end? Where *should* they begin?

HENRY: Simplify. Simplify. Wise individuals have done that from time to time. But what society has ever voluntarily taken one step in that direction? More things for more people is the noblest ideal any modern reformer has ever been able to think of. He supposes the curse will no longer be a curse if only everybody is cursed with it. But that is not what is implied in "Walden"—or in a much older book. Who can truly say that he was ever "influenced" by either my life or my writings if he still believes that the need of mankind is for still more *things?* In my day the mass of men led lives of quiet desperation. The lives of such men are less quiet in 1954, but they are no less desperate. And this is what you call Progress. The mud-turtles in Massachusetts have not changed. But they are no worse than they were when I admired them for their persistence in the ways that mud-turtles had found best for their kind. Would I could say the same for those men who are now said to live in New England.

ME: But, Henry, our society could not possibly simplify—even if it wanted to, which it certainly doesn't. That agricultural economy which was one of the few things in Concord village you approved of could not serve the needs of one-third the population of the United States— to say nothing of those in distant parts who now depend upon us for so many things. Not all the machines yet invented are more than barely sufficient to keep abreast of the needs of a constantly growing population.

HENRY: And neither will all those you may manage to invent in the future do more. It is for want of a Man that there are so many men.

ME: You can hardly be serious. You are extravagant.

HENRY: It is because I am serious that I always try, in vain, to be extravagant. No extravagance can be adequate to the plight of man. His potentialities are so great that no one can imagine them; his actuality something that makes angels weep and sent even me to mud-turtles and woodchucks for fellowship. How can such facts be moderately stated?

ME: It is not your judgment upon us that I question so much as the practicality of your proposals for improving our condition. Do you think that letting most men die of want would produce a Man? Do you hold even ordinary lives that cheap?

HENRY: Not so cheap as your world holds them. Does not that world show plainly enough that it regards them as freely expendable? Has it not improved the methods of mass destruction even more spectacularly than it has improved the methods of agriculture? Does it not act as though it had come finally to the conclusion that it is simpler to slaughter populations than it is to feed them?

ME: Perhaps, perhaps. At least it is a platitude to say so.

HENRY: That honesty is the best policy is a platitude also. And none the worse for that.

ME: I suppose so. But I still don't see how we could possibly simplify. It has become too difficult. We have gone too far.

HENRY: It will not get any easier. Is having gone too far a good reason for going further? Or is that an act of desperation? It is not the part of wisdom to do desperate things.

ME: Not all men today feel desperate or even pessimistic. The future looks very bright to some. Only the other day some representative of a highly optimistic group sent me through the mail a whole sheaf of optimistic pro-

(*Continued on page* 30)

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AMERICANA

Recollections of a River

***"The Susquehanna," by Carl Carmer** (Rinehart. 493 pp. $5), latest in the Rivers of America Series, retells the lore and legend of a great river that runs from New York State through Pennsylvania and into Maryland. John Bakeless, who reviews it below, is the author of "Daniel Boone, Master of the Wilderness" and other books on the American past.*

By John Bakeless

A SPIRITED and interesting book, with a fine feeling for the human and historical values in purely local lore, Carl Carmer's "Susquehanna" is a worthy addition to the forty-seven volumes in Rinehart's ever-lengthening Rivers of America Series, and his second contribution to it, his first being its best seller, "The Hudson." The present book tells the whole story of the river, from the day when Captain John Smith, adventuring into its mouth, chatted with raiding Indian war parties in their canoes, down to the day before yesterday. Here are the best treatments to date of several small but interesting bits of American history. One of these that chimes a startling contemporary echo is the story of the defeat of the miner-terrorists, the Molly Maguires, through the spying of a young Pinkerton detective who, like Herbert Philbrick among the Communists, worked for years in their innermost councils and then testified against them in court. Making war against owners in the name of labor, the Mollies had quickly become a kind of Irish Mafia, assassinating foremen, policemen, owners, and other miners who disagreed with them, spreading an atmosphere of lawlessness that Conan Doyle used in his Sherlock Holmes story "The Valley of Fear."

—By Stow Wengenroth, for "The Susquehanna."

". . . up the river and down the centuries."

Another, gentler episode in forgotten local history is the rise of the community of Azilum, founded by aristocratic fugitives from the French Revolution. Here in a pleasant group of farms and log cabins the emigrés worked, played Mozart and Scarlatti, cultivated the simple virtues that Rousseau taught them to seek in this wild paradise, and raised a huge log palace intended to be a refuge for Marie Antoinette. But the hard facts of economics ruined their dream, and Napoleon's amnesty for emigrées gave it the *coup-de-grace*. Its founder perished in command of a French ship under Nelson's guns off Egypt, and the settlement sank back into the wilderness.

Mr. Cramer gives us serio-comic vignettes, too. There were wars between Pennsylvanians and Connecticut invaders who crossed the Hudson and beat their way over mountains and through swamps to stake out rich farms in the Wyoming Valley. Back and forth the Connecticut settlers trekked as they won and lost skirmishes with the "Pennymites" before and during the Revolution, stolidly rearing new cabins on the ashes of the old, planting new crops, and raising new forts. With total disregard for Pennsylvanian rights, the Yankees set up a miniature New England, with town meetings and selectmen, and even claimed that they were part of Litchfield County.

Although Connecticut extraterritoriality was eventually submerged in Pennsylvania history, civil war once again erupted within her borders when Copperheads and other Confederate sympathizers were rumored to have established a bastion of secessionism in the mountains near Bloomsburg

THE AUTHOR: Ever since the mid-Twenties Carl Carmer and Americana have been a thing. It was back in those Coolidgian days that Carmer, a Hamilton College alumnus then teaching English at the University of Alabama, shed his professorial gown to go to work mining three million square miles of folkloric deposits, an adventure he related the other day in prose and song. "The things that happened around Tuscaloosa were obviously folk material out of which poetry could be made," he reminisced. Gregarious, observant, and earminded, he promptly made "One Night in Calera" out of Tuscaloosa's colorful and rhythmic carryings-on. "Calera," a narrative about razorback hogs that represented Carmer's switching from "pretty" to "Americana" poetry, was dispatched posthaste to *Poetry* but Harriet Monroe just as posthaste rejected it. Who, as the saying goes, should turn up but Carl Sandburg—ambling about the Alabama campus. Sandburg, learning about the poem, pocketed it when he left, and days later Carmer received a blue postcard from Miss Monroe. " 'All right, I'll let your dirty pigs run through my clean pages,' it said," Carmer recalled happily. "God, suddenly I thought I was a writer, I thought I was a poet, *Harriet even encouraged me to write more!*" Over the years Carmer, who in the period following his valedictory to classrooms worked on the *New Orleans Item-Tribune*, *Vanity Fair*, and *Theatre Arts Monthly*, has written a dozen books or so based on a recipe of folklore and history compassionately stirred. "Deep South," in 1930, and "Stars Fell on Alabama," in 1934, cut Carmer's niche in literature. With Stephen Vincent Benét, he helped edit the Rivers in America Series after the project was launched, taking over as editor when Benét died in 1943. Carmer, when he isn't editing or writing, is fond of giving informal tours of his "Octagon House" in Irvington-on-Hudson, N.Y., a lovely eight-sided specimen of architectural Americana dating back to 1860. Line forms to the right.

—BERNARD KALB.

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in 1864. A thousand Union troops marched against this so-called Fishing Creek Confederacy, scaling North Mountain, from whose top they expected momentarily to hear the roar of cannon, only to find the remains of a picnic in a clearing, and no fortress or Copperheads at all. The incident ended in the arrest of a few known local sympathizers and the abashed withdrawal of the troops.

AS HE brings us slowly up the river and down the centuries Mr. Carmer is quick to see the picturesque qualities of the local heroes though, unfortunately, he ignores some of the most interesting. He does full justice, however, to the pugnacious Tom Cresap, who invaded Pennsylvania from Maryland, settled on Pennsylvania territory, and held his own for a long time against the embattled Pennsylvania settlers who insisted that "Penn is our King." Twice he stood off Pennsylvania mobs, bent on driving him out and burning his cabin. The sheriff's posse sent to arrest him he described as "damned Quaking dogs and rascals." Is it any wonder that he ended in a Philadelphia jail?

Purely local though much of the material necessarily is, Mr. Carmer is extraordinarily skillful in relating it directly to the main stream of American history. He is especially successful in making the Wyoming Massacre and Sullivan's Expedition against the Iroquois integral parts of the grand strategy of the Revolution.

Mr. Carmer is extremely interesting on the old rafts and "arks" that once floated on the river, but has nothing to say of the old "log channel," said still to linger on the bottom of the shallow stream.

Worst of all there is nothing about that doughty Indian fighter Moses Van Campen. Writing about the Revolutionary Susquehanna without Moses Van Campen is like writing of Kentucky without Daniel Boone. Mr. Carmer also misses the queer fact that the only town in Pennsylvania—thanks to the whim of a long defunct Senator—stands along the Susquehanna. (All other municipalities are townships, boroughs, or cities.)

Still, any book about a river with so long and picturesque a history is bound to omit a good deal; and there is no doubt that "The Susquehanna" is a fine contribution to our knowledge of American historical background.

One small blunder wounds me personally. Mr. Carmer is all wrong about Edward "Tuslin" and Green Consolidated Copper. The gentleman's name was "Tustin." I ought to know —I married his beautiful niece.

Adobe Emporium

"Bent's Fort," by David Lavender *(Doubleday. 450 pp. $5.50), is the story of the famous nineteenth-century trading post in what is now Southeastern Colorado and of the picturesque men who passed through it. Here it is reviewed by Dale L. Morgan, member of the staff of the Bancroft Library at the University of California, author of "Jedidiah Smith and the Opening of the West" and other books.*

By Dale L. Morgan

WITH THE possible exception of Fort Laramie, Bent's Fort was the most famous trading post ever established in the West. Founded in 1833 on the north bank of the Arkansas a dozen miles above the mouth of the Purgatory, in what is now Southeastern Colorado, the fort was not only a strategically located base for trade with the southern Plains tribes but also the farthest American outpost in the Southwest. Thirteen years later it was the staging point from which Kearny launched his conquest of New Mexico, and thereafter it was both a military post and a supply point for freighters using the Raton branch of the Santa Fe Trail.

The fortresslike establishment having lost its utility as an Indian trading post, and other causes having operated to disgust him with the place and its location, the individualistic William Bent in 1849 blew it up and established Bent's New Fort some twenty-five miles farther down the Arkansas. In this incarnation it was trading post again, Indian agency, and military base for the campaigns of the Sixties against the Plains Indians—this latter one of the most stirring and tragic chapters in the annals of the West. And until now no writer has undertaken a large-scale reconstruction of all this extraordinary history. The job had to wait for a David Lavender, and in the presence of "Bent's Fort" we may rejoice that no one jumped the gun.

By no means just the history of a place, "Bent's Fort" is really the story of the four Bent brothers, Charles, William, George, and Robert, and of their partners, Ceran and Marcellin St. Vrain. The Bents and St. Vrains took the entire West as their province, and altered and channeled most of the energies at work in that province; one can scarcely conceive of an early West from which they are absent. There are kaleidoscopic changes of scene in their story, from the mannered homes of old St. Louis to a winter encampment on the Green, from the stockaded forts on the Yellowstone to the sun-baked New Mexican towns, but always the central stage is the huge structure raised on the Arkansas which gives name to the "adobe empire" which was theirs.

Memorable scenes jostle one another throughout the course of the book: battles with Blackfeet and Arikaras; traders taking their doubts and fears along with their ambition and avarice out upon the Santa Fe Trail; American trappers fanning out into the unknown Southwest and afterwards defying Mexican authority to keep their furs; Pegleg Smith amputating his own mangled leg; Cheyennes, Comanches, and Kiowas accustoming themselves to a new way of life inevitably following upon the presence among them of traders for buffalo hides; Texas raiders making everyone uncomfortable, themselves included; the occupation of New Mexico and its aftermath, the Taos Massacre, in which Charles Bent lost his life. And perhaps most of all the destruction of the Plains Indians in the course of white occupation of the West. This is a many-colored, almost overdetailed, and sometimes very moving picture of an era in American history and, as intimated already, a job that has badly needed doing.

THOSE who have read Mr. Lavender's previous books, especially "The Big Divide," know that he has qualities too rarely met with in writers of Western history: genuine intellectual curiosity, critical acumen, knowledge and love of the country, the ability to write—and, with all the rest, willingness to work at his job. In this book he is a little too exuberant at times, so that there is an occasional looseness of statement and some jumping to conclusions. At the end he provides more than fifty pages of notes, many of great interest and value, but as he does not document the narrative consistently (laying emphasis rather on points of departure from existing authority), he might have made it more completely useful by heading the notes to each

(*Continued on page* 28)

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Right and Wrong in 1955

"Human Society in Ethics and Politics," by Bertrand Russell (Simon & Schuster. 227 pp. $3.50), is the first extended statement of his views on ethics by the greatest living philosopher. Here it is reviewed by Brand Blanshard, professor of the philosophy at Yale.

By Brand Blanshard

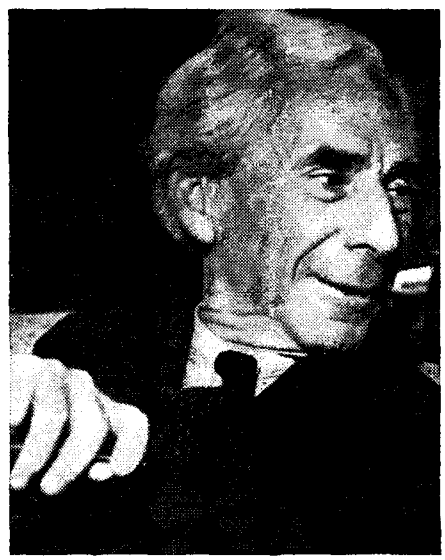
IF A VOTE were taken among specialists as to the greatest name among living philosophers there would not be much doubt of the outcome. Some votes would be cast reluctantly, but most of them would go to Bertrand Russell. He has received about every honor that is open to a philosopher, including the Order of Merit, the Nobel Prize, and (as he reminds us in his new book, "Human Society in Ethics and Politics") exclusion from the schools of New York as unfit to teach.

There will be a special interest in this volume because it is the first extended statement of his later views on ethics. Nearly half a century ago, while still under the influence of his Cambridge colleague G. E. Moore, he wrote an essay in ethics in which his position was as follows: what makes an act objectively right or wrong is its results, and ultimately results that are good or bad in themselves. What do we mean by "good" or "bad"? No one can say. They are names for qualities that we all know perfectly well, and can see with certainty to belong to some things and not to others. But the qualities themselves are too simple to be analyzed or defined.

In ethics as in most other fields Russell's mind has moved far in the last half century. He still thinks that what makes an action right is the goodness of its results, and hence that the key idea in ethics is not the right but the good. But there is one change of tremendous importance. Fifty years ago he thought that when we called a thing good we were saying something about it, something that was true or false. He now thinks that we are saying nothing at all. We are merely exclaiming about it—expressing our yearning for it or satisfaction in it; and exclamations are neither true nor false.

It follows that the appeal to reason, of which Russell is so persuasive an advocate, is very limited in its range. Reason can be used to settle a dispute about means, but never about ends. If two men agree, for example, that an educated mind is worth having for its own sake they can discuss rationally which kind of training is the most effective way of reaching that end, and one may convince the other by evidence. But if they differ about the end itself there is no relevant argument or evidence that either can produce, for they are not arguing for contradictory theses; neither is advancing any thesis at all; they are merely desiring different things. "It follows that there is nothing truly objective in the supposed concept of 'objective rightness,' except so far as the desires of different men coincide." If this is true are moral rules any longer possible? Yes, though in a very restricted sense. Since most of us fortunately desire the same kind of things there are general counsels that can be laid down as to the best ways of gaining them. Russell tries hard to find a place for duty in his system; he suggests that we "ought" to do the act that would through its consequences satisfy the widest range of human desires. It is evident that he himself, as befits a public-spirited citizen and the God-child of John Stuart Mill, takes this as his own exacting rule of duty.

But why should anyone else? He admits that such conduct is right for him only because he happens to desire its results. But what if he did not desire them, as is the case with too many people? Would he then have no duty to regard the interests of others? Russell dislikes intensely to say this; in chapter after chapter he approaches it and implies it, only to draw back from saying it quite baldly. Yet on his own premises there is no escape from this conclusion. And I am convinced—though the reasons would be a long story—that you cannot build an ethics on this sort of foundation.



—*Disraeli.*

Bertrand Russell—"never a conformist."

IT MAY seem strange to say that where its central thesis is in error a book may still be outstandingly good. Nevertheless, I do say it of this book unhesitatingly. Russell is still Russell, and that extraordinary intelligence seems unable to touch on any subject without lighting it up with wit as well as wisdom. It touches in this volume on many of the most important issues of the time. Would it be possible to retain a high level of morality if the support of religious belief were withdrawn? Russell discusses the pros and cons, and answers Yes. Can you consistently believe in praise and blame without believing in free will? To this Bertrand Russell replies that you cannot believe in them and also believe in free will. And, of course, what is our prospect for the immediate future?

In answer to that question Russell develops what he has been saying of late in newspapers, magazines, and broadcasts; that an outbreak of atomic war would bring not a victory for either side, but a destruction so appalling as to carry us back to the dark ages. The only way to avert this, he thinks, is to bring both sides to a realization that war is out of date because, as now conducted, neither side could win; the victor nation itself would be largely destroyed. He proposes that one of the relatively neutral powers such as India should invite a commission of experts to report in detail what the results of such a war would be. If this report proved convincing to both sides there would be some chance of their agreeing on a congress in which the points of dispute could be discussed realistically. Both sides hold cards in their hands that could be used to the great lessening of world tensions. Suppose the Kremlin granted free elections in Germany, and Washington recognized Red China; that in itself would remove two of the chief points of danger.

Russell has never been a conformist, and now at eighty-three he is even less of a conformist than he was at thirty-three. The best course is to give him up as hopeless and to read everything he writes.

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"Fermentative" French Thinker

"The Embattled Philosopher: A Biography of Denis Diderot," by Lester G. Crocker *(Michigan State College Press. 442 pp. $6.50), is the first twentieth-century study of the editor of the famous French Encyclopedia. Below it is reviewed by J. Salwyn Schapiro, professor emeritus of history at the City College of New York, author of "Condorcet" and other books.*

By J. Salwyn Schapiro

ENFIN! A new biography of Diderot, the first since that by John Morley, which appeared seventy-five years ago. Its name: "The Embattled Philosopher." Its author: Lester G. Crocker. The many-sided, often contradictory Diderot belonged to that species among writers now known as the "intelligentsia," which had its origin in the *philosophes* of eighteenth-century France. Then, almost for the first time, a literary movement appeared that placed social problems in the very forefront of man's intellectual life. The writings of the *philosophes,* one and all, were animated by a hatred of the social and political order of their day, the "Old Regime," and by an ardent desire to establish a new order based on reason, freedom, and equality. Diderot in the judgment of the author ranks with the more famous Voltaire, Rousseau, and Montesquieu as an outstanding figure of the *philosophe* movement.

Why? Although Diderot wrote voluminously and on many subjects he did not write a single book that has become a "must" for readers everywhere. Neither did he formulate his ideas and organize his knowledge in a coherent system of thought. His "characteristic mode of expression," states the author, "was in loose-jointed thoughts or tightly knit, brilliant dialogues." Entertaining, suggestive, and frequently original, Diderot scattered his ideas in a profusion of pamphlets, articles, dramas, novels, letters, and imaginary dialogues. Mr. Crocker has managed to capture the brilliant flashes, the vagrant moods, and the half-expressed insights of Diderot and present them in compact, coherent form. No mean achievement that.

The author devotes considerable space to Diderot's personal life. "The Philosopher," as Diderot was generally called by his associates, emerges from the book what he was in real life: the bad husband, the good father, the inconstant lover, the gay bohemian, the *beau sabreur* of controversy, the rationalist with a "tendency towards weepy sentimentality." Every facet of this extraordinary character—and he had many facets—is described and judged by the author in a spirit of charity tempered with justice. Diderot never achieved domestic happiness, either in his marriage or in his many affairs of the "heart." Always when running to one woman he was running away from another. "If there was anything Diderot was fanatical about it was virtue, and yet how often did he deny its very existence!" Not altogether an admirable figure but a very lovable one.

Diderot was up to his chin in the intellectual life of his time. "To whatever quarter he turned," wrote Morley, "he caught the rising illumination." And the illumination of the Enlightenment caused his mind to work in reaction, like an anvil. "Each time it was struck by the hammer of some outside stimulus," writes Mr. Crocker, "ideas flew off like sparks." Essentially Diderot was an experimentalist; whatever his position he remained always open to alternative possibilities. In his "Letter on the Blind" he espoused the philosophy of materialism, repudiating all religions, especially Christianity. At the same time his inborn idealism reacted against dogmatic atheism, causing him to reject "religions but not the religious spirit." Because Diderot saw the impossibility of adhering consistently to any system of ethics he remained continuously in a state of moral dilemma.

DIDEROT has been described as the "fermentative" thinker of the Enlightenment, whose "role was greater than his work." There was not an ear more open, an eye more curious, or a tongue more talkative. The most loquacious of the *philosphes,* Diderot flitted from subject to subject with the greatest ease and with seeming coherence. He was at his best in his ability to turn abstract ideas into concrete formulas, often with a prestidigitator's art of precipitating a theory into a fact. As a stylist Diderot cannot be compared with his great contemporaries. He had neither the compressed clarity of Voltaire, nor the poetic eloquence of Rousseau, nor the serene elegance of Montesquieu. His was the provocative style of the vivacious, intelligent journalist, ready and able to turn out a "piece" at short notice.

—Culver.

Diderot's "ideas flew off like sparks."

What then makes Diderot an outstanding *philosophe?* It is according to the author his editorship of the French Encyclopedia, the greatest rationalist work of the Enlightenment. Diderot "alone was responsible for the conception of the great work, for its continuance, and for its completion." He succeeded in raising editorship to the height of a creative art by making the Encyclopedia the collective work of famous specialists and by including articles dealing with science, agriculture, commerce, and industry. These innovations became a model for the general encyclopedias that followed. For twenty years he worked on it at a low salary, neglecting his health and risking his safety. "It is my life," he declared, "my rest, my happiness, my health."

The Encyclopedia had another significance. It was a giant "siege gun" with which the *philosophes* attacked the evils of the Old Regime. Directly or by implication articles written by them condemned religious intolerance, despotic government, restrictions on commerce and industry, feudal exactions, and violations of personal liberty. Before long it fell foul of the four established censorships, that of the Church, the Government, the courts, and the Sorbonne. "Around the Encyclopedia," comments Mr. Crocker, "the greatest and the most crucial fight of the century was

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waged." And the hero of this fight was Diderot. Almost alone the embattled philosopher defended the Encyclopedia against its powerful enemies. And he won a great battle in the never-ceasing struggle for freedom of thought. With Heine Diderot could say: "Lay on my coffin a sword for I was a brave soldier in the war for the liberation of mankind."

Mr. Crocker has done an outstanding job in presenting a vivid account of this most vivid of the French *philosophes* and a penetrating analysis of his contributions to the ideas of the period of the Enlightenment. Although he gives few references, and no bibliography, the author's mastery of his subject is plainly evident to the reader. What he presents is the result of knowledge fully digested.

Brighter Futures

BETTER AND BETTER: Several years ago, in a New Year's Day editorial, a metropolitan newspaper remarked that no one today hopes for progress any more. Each of us is now content if, at the turn of the year, we have succeeded in holding our own. So melancholy an observation, however appropriate to our own period of history, would hardly have been made at the turn of the century or indeed at any time up to World War I. In those halcyon years everyone read Herbert Spencer and everyone believed in progress. Every day in every way everything was getting better and better and would continue to do so into the distant future. Much has happened since to disabuse us of this comfort and the idea of progress accordingly requires a new evaluation.

This "revaluation" is the task which Morris Ginsberg sets for himself in a little book called **"The Idea of Progress"** (Beacon Press, $1.75). Mr. Ginsberg, who is Martin White Professor of Sociology in the University of London, discusses here in his usual lucid fashion the forms which the belief in progress has taken, the various theories of perfectibility, the idea as it appears in such writers as Comte, Hegel, Marx, and Toynbee, and the relationship between evolution and progress.

Mr. Ginsberg concludes with the cautious view that by taking thought and by constructing a rational ethic men can even now find some justification for the idea of progress. Progress is not a necessary consequence of history but rather a movement toward the attainment of ethical ideals. The conclusion raises questions, of course, but as a sociological essay in the English manner Mr. Ginsberg's book merits the attention of the American reader. —Robert Bierstedt.

FICTION

Potpourri of Destinies

***"Face Value," by Robert Standish** (Doubleday. 253 pp. $3.50), offers twenty-two well-plotted yarns, with settings in Asia, old-family Britain, and random spots throughout the Empire.*

By James Kelly

"IT IS A fascinating if unrewarding pastime to dwell on the queer chains of causation set up by apparently unrelated events, for nothing illustrates better the incalculable chances that seem to govern human destinies. The story I am about to relate could never have been written but for . . ." This little observation opens one of the twenty-two stories contained in Robert Standish's "Face Value," but it applies equally to all of them. On the evidence here presented, most readers will agree with the word "fascinating" and will demur at the word "unrewarding." On firmer and more tillable ground than in cinematic novels such as "Elephant Walk," "Follow the Seventh Man," and a half dozen more, Mr. Standish seems entirely at home in the narrower focus of the literary conundrums brought together in his latest volume.

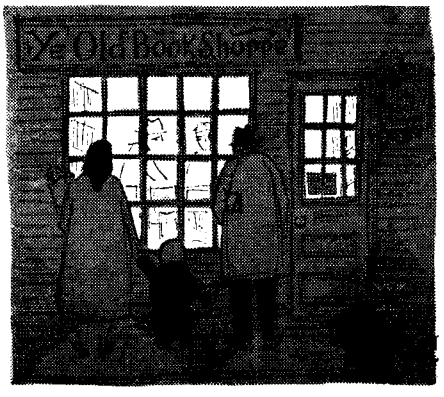
For this is old-fashioned storytelling, with beginning, middle, and snapper ending. Plot rests unabashedly on Fate, red herrings, and the supernatural, rather than upon character prognosis. As in those old "Mr. Tutt" tales in *The Saturday Evening Post*, wily humans depend upon their (and the author's) ingenuity to get out of desperate predicaments. Perhaps the Standish stories are too engineered, assembled, mechanized, and tricky for some tastes. As a one-man cheering section for mendacity, venality, and protagonists who get away with murder if need be, Mr. Standish may run afoul of prejudices here and there. But nobody can say that this is saccharine stuff, and not many will deny its spell. The author's acid (sometimes hilarious) wit and crisp, delicately modulated style are equal to the occasions that arise.

Whether set in Asia, modern feudal England, or random outposts of Empire, the stories carry authority of place and mood. None more so than six amusing, nuanceful Oriental embroideries, three of them about Chinese lawyers who specialize in the framed alibi, the legal loophole, and the wider vistas of blackmail. Another tells of a thoughtful Soochow magician who used twins (one of them expendable) to duplicate the old Houdini escape act. A diminutive masterpiece called "Thieves' Justice" tells of the poetic, remorseless justice meted out to an inept pupil in a school for crime; and there is a farcical note of a cuckolded ancient whose young rival saves the day by donning a beard and tampering with oracular justice.

COMING home to the drafty family seats of England, there are four or five folk items dealing diversely with the common problems of evading the estate tax and coping with the black sheep younger son or brother who has been to America and returns as a mysterious Big Success. These pinpoint the fierce family pride and musty ways as only a participant could do it.

Of the stand-alone titles one called "The Eye of the Beholder" may be the most poignant and sentimental piece in the book as it pictures the triumphant inner beauty of a grotesque French girl married to a blind man who suddenly regains his sight. And there are two W. R. Burnettish gangster notes: about a young Italian smuggler who comes to America to join the big time before returning (suspensefully) to marry and settle down; and about a falling out among smugglers and the eventual murder which put the narrator where he is, in the death house.

As pointed out above, Mr. Standish may seem bearish on human nature and repetitious in his themes and format. But "Face Value" assays high in that hen's-tooth rarity: entertainment.



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Vibrant World

"The Black Prince and Other Stories," by Shirley Ann Grau *(Alfred A. Knopf. 294 pp. $3.50), is the first collection of short stories by a talented young Southern writer.*

By William Peden

THREE of Shirley Ann Grau's short stories have been previously published in book form (one of them, "Joshua," is included in the O. Henry Memorial Awards for 1955), but "The Black Prince and Other Stories" is her first full-length book. In view of the depressing scarcity of exciting new talent which characterized the year just ended, it would be nice to be able to hail young (she is only twenty-five) Miss Grau as a great new writer, but this would be unfair both to her and to her admirers. Miss Grau is a very promising young author; probably she has a real career ahead of her. Few of her stories, however, quite measure up to the promises so feverishly proclaimed on the dust jacket ("unique talent," "awesome versatility," "very gifted," "rare vitality," "refreshing enchantment"). But Miss Grau, of course, is not responsible for such exuberant blurb-writing; she is able, intelligent, and honest: her work is completely lacking in pretentiousness, bombast, or affectation.

Most of these stories center around Negroes in Louisiana, where Miss Grau was born, raised, educated (at Newcomb College and Tulane University), and where she now lives. These "colored" stories are quite definitely the best of her work. The reader may be occasionally mildly troubled by Miss Grau's tendency to blur or confuse her own point of view with that of her focal characters as she does in the rather unsuccessful story "Miss Yellow Eyes"; for the most part, though, she writes with considerable control and skill. More important, she sees and hears well; most important, she understands what she sees and hears. To an uninitiated ear her dialect is for the most part effective; her people are almost always convincing. Miss Grau, further, displays considerable variety and flexibility; whether she works in the border-region of myth and folklore, as she does in the effective title story of Stanley "the Black Prince" who "just come walking out of the morning fog . . . whistling a bird call in the woods in high summer," or in the more traditional medium of the realistic "The Way of a Man," she avoids sensationalism, violence, and whimsy for their own sakes. She writes out of neither sentimental love nor tear-filled despair. Hers is not a namby-pamby world of dreams, or a darkened alley in which animals die meaningless deaths. Frustration and violence and death are present in her world, but so also are serenity and achievement and life. She has produced a world not haunted by victims of malignant destiny, but an essentially vibrant one lived in by human beings whom she reveals during moments of stress, crisis, or decision.

Miss Grau's "white" stories are less impressive; they include a trivial account of a family's effort to defraud a kinswoman, and a labored presentation of a boy's death-precipitated awareness of the adult world. Even these pieces, however, are redeemed by some sound storytelling and convincing characterizations. Indeed, no one of Miss Grau's stories could be called a failure, most of them are good, and one or two of them are really memorable. With "The Black Prince" she has made a satisfying, if not spectacular, debut.

Shirley Ann Grau—"a real career ahead."

Portrait of Alethea, a Quakeress

By Anne Young

IN HER presence is a music,
But a music falling
Into silence, its own
Late melody recalling.

Let a vision paint her
In still serenity
Looking to the Lamb that walks
White through eternity.

Immortal Mystery Mar

"All Men Are Mortal," by Simon de Beauvoir *(translated by Leonar M. Friedman. World Publishing Co 345 pp. $5), a 1946 Existentialis novel by this year's winner of th Goncourt Prize, is the story of a dar man of mystery named Fosca wh roams through five centuries of time*

By Laurent LeSage

THE Goncourt prize, traditionall intended for the young and prom ising, went this year to a writer wh only out of gallantry could be calle young and who is already interna tionally famous. As Frenchmen settl down to read Simone de Beauvoir' voluminous "Mandarins," which th Goncourt jury found good enough t disregard tradition for, we may rea "All Men Are Mortal," a curious *cont philosophique* that she wrote back i 1946 when Existentialism was in it heyday.

The book opens upon a world w know well enough from "She Cam to Stay"—the realistic world of Pari sian actors and producers, that o Regina, an ambitious actress, and he friends who are also her enemies For it is the characteristic Existen tialist world where predatory ego engage in mortal and hopeless com bat. All this, however, is just a pro logue, and Regina just another woma in the life of a dark man of myster named Fosca whom Regina has en countered while on tour and whos story now proceeds to unfold.

Rendered immortal through a elixir drunk five centuries ago, Fosc has been in the thick of history eve since. First master of one of the mos powerful among the Italian repub lics, then advisor to Charles V, par ticipant in the new world adventure *philosophe* and then revolutionary i France, this palimpsestic hero nov seeks repose, since death is denie him, in the immobility of a decl chair in the sun.

If it is possible to believe Virgini Woolf wrote her "Orlando" as a pre cious piece of fun, no such light heartedness could be claimed fo Beauvoir's tale about a man wh crosses the ages. It is packed wit problems of politics, economics, an metaphysics that the lady fron Bloomsbury never dallied with Gravely the evidence of man's futil ity and folly is sifted to find a reaso for his existence and a code of con duct that will fit his nature. Abov all else there is the problem, alread

(*Continued on page* 29)

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Dazzling Christian Hero

***"Gordon of Khartoum," by Lord Elton** (Alfred A. Knopf. 376 pp. $6), is a biography of the mid-nineteenth-century Briton who served his Empire heroically as soldier and administrator in the Crimea, China, and Egypt. Here it is reviewed by George Dangerfield, author of "The Strange Death of Liberal England."*

By George Dangerfield

LORD ELTON has written a biography of General Charles George Gordon which the more enlightened of Gordon's contemporaries and admirers—T. H. Huxley, for example—might have found both gratifying and intelligible. Here is the Christian Hero of Victorian legend, with his Christianity purged of all orthodoxies, and his heroism relieved of the dropsy of sentiment and panegyric. I mention Huxley because he was not a Gladstonian (and Mr. Gladstone, next to Lytton Strachey, is the villain of Lord Elton's book) and because he said that of all the people he had met in his life Darwin and Gordon were the only two in whom he had found "a sublime unselfishness." Coming from an argumentative Victorian rationalist, whom Gordon had tried to convince not only that the soul was immortal, but also that the *coco de mer* (a large nut found only in the Seychelles) was the actual forbidden fruit of the Garden of Eden, these words are strongest evidence of the General's sincerity, originality, and charm. But what is "unselfishness"? And why should one suppose that Darwin with his hypochondria and Gordon with his odd craving for death will help us to understand what it is?

What the reader misses in Lord Elton's book is what Gordon's contemporaries would not and could not have missed—and that is any recognition of the thought that modern psychology, cautiously used, might have something pertinent to say about Gordon as a selfish man—that is to say, as a human being. Elton has read quantities of Gordon's unpublished letters, hitherto inaccessible to the biographer; and we know of the published correspondence that it is almost clinical in its revelations. The obvious retort is that psychology and history have not yet come to terms; and that in any case it is impossible for a layman biographer to make such a thing as a cautious use of modern psychology. If this is so—and I am not convinced that it is—then we may well content ourselves with Elton's evaluation of Gordon as a genius in irregular warfare, a born ruler of primitive peoples, an unorthodox saint, and a prize eccentric. To have presented this dazzling theme with competence, humor, and dignity is surely enough; and the reviewer is exceeding his functions if he complains that Elton has refused to peer into those depths of Gordon's personality from which the genius, the saint, and the eccentric all arose.

In any case, Lord Elton's approach has certain obvious advantages. By interpreting Gordon's wonderful career as an eccentric religious struggle against what was dangerous, alluring, and specious in the outer world, rather than as a complicated defense against what was terrifying and unacceptable *in himself*, Elton has produced a remarkable study of the eternal opposition between men of action and men of words. Gordon's description of the notables whom he observed at St. James's Palace in the 1870s is typical. "A mass of glitter," he wrote, "to be worms in thirty yrs." (One might compare this with his affectionate dismissal of a long-winded deputation of Sudanese sheiks and holy men. "Now, old birds," he said, "it's time for you to go.") Nor could he bring himself to play the political game. This is one of the reasons why, having proved that he had a genius for irregular warfare in his suppression of the Taiping Rebellion in 1856, he was not employed by the British Government in any of the minor wars upon which it embarked during the next twenty years.

—*Portrait by Lady Abercromby.*

Gordon—"a prize eccentric."

NOT that Gordon was an anti-imperialist: he was ready to fight for the British Empire, or indeed any empire. But he simply could not bring himself to see that the business of the nineteenth-century British Empire was, in fact, Business. He had some notion that men since they were equal in the sight of God should also be equal in the sight of one another; and he supposed that the business of empires was to promote such a state of affairs. In this belief, however, he was not consistent. He also held the counterbelief that poverty and inequality, since they evidently existed, must be part of God's plan. He was content to wage a modest, innocent, but devastating vendetta against British officials and politicians.

And here, at any rate, he won his case. By going to Khartoum in 1884 and being killed there by the Mahdi's spearmen in 1885 he has done more than any single man to point out the inconsistencies of nineteenth-century Liberal imperialism. Why should Mr. Gladstone, who had smashed an Egyptian nationalist uprising for the sake of the holders of Egyptian bonds, refuse to save Gordon from the Mahdists on the plea that the Mahdists constituted a nationalist uprising? Lord Elton's treatment of this, as of every other incident in Gordon's life, is quite masterly. He has portrayed the outer Gordon with authority and charm; he has presented him as a tragic and brilliant soliloquist in the curious drama of the *pax britannica;* he has also defended him successfully against Strachey's accusation of occasional drunkenness: but around the inner Gordon—with his hatred of the body, his craving for death, his revulsions from his own aggressive drives, his patently suppressed sexuality—he has drawn a magic line. It is a line which none of Gordon's contemporaries, whether enlightened or not, whether friends or enemies, would have wished to cross. But we are not Gordon's contemporaries.

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Distillation of Darwin

"Charles Darwin," by Ruth Moore *(Alfred A. Knopf. 206 pp. $2.50), a volume in the new Great Lives in Brief Series, treats a contemporary of Gordon of Khartoum—the zoologist who revolutionized the intellectual life of his century. Edwin H. Colbert, who reviews it here, is curator of fossils and amphibians at the American Museum of Natural History.*

By Edwin H. Colbert

CHARLES DARWIN was not only one of the great scientists of modern times, he was also one of the truly great men of all history. In this twentieth-century world, which is being changed materially at an ever-increasing and often frightening rate by the physicists and chemists, the profound intellectual revolution that took form a hundred years ago from the stimulus of Darwin's researches and writings is often but dimly realized. Too few people nowadays are familiar with Darwin's life and with the significance of his work.

In her contribution to the new Great Lives in Brief Series, Ruth Moore attempts to present Darwin to a large and general audience with a book that is a distillation, one might say, of Darwin's writings and of previous biographies and sketches. In view of the limited space at her disposal, she has succeeded admirably. Her biography is well written and interesting, and except for some small errors is authentic. It should fill a distinct need.

Darwin's life was divided into two periods. The first period was the time of growing up, and particularly the brief span of young manhood that terminated with the glorious and adventurous voyage around the world on H. M. S. *Beagle*. The second period was that lasting from his return home and his marriage to Emma Wedgwood to his death at the age of seventy-three. This second period, in contrast to the exciting and strenuous days of the *Beagle* expedition, was a time of sedentary quiet, spent in his comfortable home at Down.

Miss Moore begins with an account of Darwin's visit to the Galapagos Islands, during the final stages of the voyage of the *Beagle*. This was perhaps the crucial point in Darwin's life, because it was here that he saw so vividly the differences in animals and plants from one island to another, and thus got his first inklings as to the roles of natural selection and geographic isolation in the origin of species. With this important event of Darwin's life as an introduction, she then goes back to an account of his early days spent in a home blessed with all the material advantages of wealth, and tempered by the good sense of intelligent parents and relatives. The author then continues with the *Beagle* voyage, and after that the tale of Darwin's long years of study and writing, of his physical suffering (a legacy of hard days and nights on ship and in the wilds and the primitive settlements of South America), and of his very happy family life.

HER account of the voyage, although it covers the essential details of that momentous expedition, is of necessity so abbreviated and disjointed that it loses something in the telling. (Any second-hand description of the voyage of the *Beagle* is bound to suffer in comparison with Darwin's own journal.) On the other hand, her story of Darwin's later life is well done; it emphasizes the significance of his work and presents a well-balanced interpretation of his accomplishments.

It is a pity that this book could not have a few pictures of Darwin, a picture of the *Beagle*, and perhaps one or two other illustrations. These would have added considerably to the usefulness of the volume.

The Island's Past

"The Story of England," by Arthur Bryant *(Houghton Mifflin. 399 pp. $5), the first volume of a projected trilogy, carries the account from the physical creation of the island to its political creation upon the accession of Edward I. Our reviewer, Elliott Perkins, is master of Lowell House, Harvard University.*

By Elliott Perkins

SIR ARTHUR BRYANT has undertaken to write for this generation its popular history in a way that it can understand. He is not writing for the student public, but for the general public. Those who believe it necessary to keep alive a sense of history among the general reader will read his work to see how well Sir Arthur has fostered this. Those who simply read history will read it to see if they like it. Neither group should be disappointed.

In "The Story of England," the first volume of a projected trilogy, Sir Arthur carries the account from the creation of the island to the accession of Edward I, which is from geographical creation to political creation. The story began when the ocean inundated what had been the plain of the lower Rhine, and made England an island, *of* Europe but not *in* Europe. It was an inviting island, offering a mild climate, fertile soil, and, as time went on, plunder. In this first phase of its existence, the four or five or more thousand years ending in 1066, it was subject to a series of invasions. The flint-working, barrow-building Iberians came first, moving into what seems to have been a manless island. They were followed by bronze-working Beaker Folk, the builders of Stonehenge; and they, after perhaps a thousand years, by the iron-working, head-hunting, flaming-haired Celts. This brings us to the edge of recorded history, during the first first thousand years of which Roman, Saxon, Dane, and Norman entered, and seriously disturbed, the English scene. Each of these peoples, except the Iberians, who had no predecessors, in varying degrees killed, displaced, and assimilated the peoples already on the ground, erected their own civilization, sometimes more and sometimes less affected by that which had gone before, prospered, and in their turn went down. Not until after the Norman Conquest did armed invasion cease to be successful. Then, over a period of two hundred years, political England grew into recognizable form. That form may be discerned, somewhat dimly, when

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the barons and the mayor of London faced down King John at Runnymede. It may be seen clearly in the circumstances surrounding the accession of Edward I. When Henry III died, in 1272, Edward was far away on a crusade. But there was no disorder, no disputed succession. The king's peace was proclaimed, and maintained, in Edward's name and in his absence. He was quietly crowned on his return. England had attained political being, as well as geographic.

THESE are the bare bones of the story. They stand, as they have stood. And the facts that pad them out to the points of interest and information stand as they have stood; they can be found in the pages of J. R. Green and G. M. Trevelyan as in those of Sir Arthur Bryant. They will be found in those of their successors. But the interpretations change. Those who know the earlier historians will note a shift in tone; the older men had not known Coventry and Warsaw and Lidice. Mass murder, conquest, and enslavement by a ruthless foe they knew as tales of long ago; they could be viewed objectively as parts of necessary historical adjustments. Bryant brings us more of the tragedy.

He brings us, too, and of set purpose, more sense of the individual as an individual than as an embodiment of an historical process. Alfred, Henry II, and Becket are more than usually appealing in these pages; John, with all due credit given him, is more than usually repellent; and so throughout. This is the story of English people, well told.

Yet objections lie. This is an undertaking to write history, and history is a scholarly art. Certain of its standards are pretty rigid, and for cause. The writer of "popular" history should be alert to that line at which the effort to reach the public becomes writing down to the public. Anyone with a sense of history wants more dates, more easily found, than are provided in this volume. Anyone without a sense of history (which is to a degree a sense of chronology) should be helped to acquire it. Many readers will want to pursue further the avenues down which Sir Arthur has shown such fascinating prospects. If they want suggestions as to what they may read, they can find them in Green or Trevelyan; they can't get them here. The total absence of maps is especially deplorable in popular history designed for readers who presumably neither have nor will acquire the necessary geographical dimension of history. With all its merits, this book needs more of the bare bones of scholarship in proportion to its art.

U.S.A. AND THE WORLD

Gospel for the State Department

***"Civilization and Foreign Policy," by Louis J. Halle** (Harper. 277 pp. $3.75), is the effort of a former member of the State Department's Policy Planning Staff to formulate a body of general theory that should govern our foreign relations. Our reviewer is Lindsay Rogers, professor of government at Columbia University.*

By Lindsay Rogers

WHEN he was still on the State Department's Policy Planning Staff, and thus "a practical man dealing with practical problems," Louis J. Halle "felt keenly the lack of an applicable body of theory." This lack his new book, "Civilization and Foreign Policy," attempts to fill and it is thus a little more pretentious than the writings of his former colleagues George Kennan and Charles B. Marshall, who had earlier found the atmosphere of the Dulles-McLeod State Department somewhat less than congenial and, after their resignations, expressed some provocative and intelligent views on the conduct of American foreign policy without announcing that they were furnishing doctrines that practical men could rely upon.

Of necessity Mr. Halle traverses ground that has already been much plowed. He laments the existence of two great power blocs and yearns, without much hope, for a return to the multi-lateral balance of power that maintained peace in Europe for the century following the Congress of Vienna. He analyzes the nature of the Soviet threat and is equally severe on the ignorance of the isolationists who want to wash their hands of Europe; the muddleheadedness of the Asialationists who preach that the Far East is of greater concern to us than Europe, and the schizophrenia of those who play with the idea of a "preventive war," which Bismarck said was as foolish as a recommendation of suicide because death is inevitable. An attempt at dominion would be as insane as a return to isolation.

Mr. Halle preaches that the home front must be kept healthy if a nation is to be strong at home and exert any influence abroad. If consent and leadership—that is, "legitimacy"—are the basis of government at home they must be the basis of our dealings with the other members of the international community to which we belong. A state must always be careful not to announce objectives beyond its means, for this "leads to the reduction of its means" and "compounds weakness." It is foolish to attempt, as Woodrow Wilson desired, to make the world over in our own image. Several times Mr. Halle defines power as "the ability to get one's own way," and argues that in foreign as well as domestic matters willing consent is far preferable to forced compliance. A legitimate government—that is, one that rests on consent—can tolerate an opposition. Dictatorships must depend on force and fear. In the international sphere we should strive for a coalition commanding consent and avoid any suggestion of dictation.

This brief summary may do less than justice to Mr. Halle's contribution to theory. His analysis, even though closely reasoned, flows along as is made clear by homely illustrations. The book is easy to read. But, as the author admits, much of it seems to boil down to the Theodore Roosevelt doctrine that recent Presidents have frequently ignored—"Speak softly and carry a big stick."

MR. HALLE'S contribution to a theory of international politics will disappoint the reader who seeks guidance in respect of current problems of for-

—*Scott Long, in* The Minneapolis Tribune.

"Fingers Stuck in the Bowling Ball."

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eign policy. A program to keep Indo-China from falling to the Communists; the future of Formosa; the admission fees that the People's Republic of China should be made to pay for membership in the United Nations and the timing of their attempted collection; the pros and cons of substantial expenditures on military and naval installations in Franco's Spain; the possibility or impossibility of a mountainous Big Four meeting producing a mouse that would not frighten the United States —these are problems on which a "general theory" of international relations does not throw much light. Those who accept the "general theory" will be inclined to make their discussion of these questions less heated than it might otherwise be.

The State Department's Policy group has doubtless given its answers in papers presented to different Secretaries of State. It is to be hoped that after the planners are dead, or irrevocably out of Government service, historians will be able to see the answers and tell their readers how far Secretaries of State departed from the expert advice they received. Some Congressional committees would have liked to write such history themselves but Secretaries of State have properly said No. The ex-planners are articulate on matters in general but do not disclose what their views were when they were in the Department and endeavoring to do some planning. Who can blame them? Some of them may want to return to the Department if and when for the Foreign Service the climate of "Foggy Bottom" has become more salubrious.

Foreign Analysis for the Layman

***"European Union and United States Foreign Policy," by F. S. C. Northrop** (Macmillan. 230 pp. $4.75), is another analysis intended for laymen of our present foreign policy, particularly as it affects Western Europe. Here it is reviewed by Professor Edgar S. Furniss, Jr., of Princeton University, co-author of "American Foreign Policy."*

By Edgar S. Furniss, Jr.

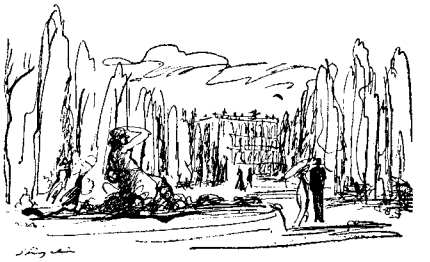
IT IS to the lay American public now becoming increasingly aware of the complex problem of promoting unity among the nations of Western Europe, rather than to smaller, professional groups that F. S. C. Northrop, author of "The Meeting of East and West" and "The Taming of the Nations," is probably addressing himself in his new book, "European Union and United States Foreign Policy." Professor Northrop's purpose is to demonstrate the feasibility of six-power Continental union and the attendent influence which American foreign policy has on the attainment or non-attainment of that goal. He is also interested in showing the value of what he calls "sociological jurisprudence" as an analytical device. This term we are told in the preface "is the science which studies the relation between (a) the positive legal constitutions, institutions, and procedures and (b) the underlying living habits, associations, and beliefs of the people to whom the positive legal associations are applied." To this definition is later added the statement that "sociological jurisprudence informs us that the introduction of new positive law is unlikely to be effective unless the norms which it expresses are supported by common norms in the underlying living law of the peoples to whom it is applied."

Professor Northrop then proceeds to summarize the four existing intra-European institutions: the Council of Europe and the Coal-Steel, Defense, and Political Communities. Against this background he argues that the "living law norms" of the majority of people in the six nations involved in the three Communities are congruent enough to support the transfer of real power from the national to the international entity. To illustrate "living law norms" the author chooses popular religious affiliations (Roman Catholic) and political voting behavior (Catholic, Socialist, and Liberal). To a diversity of "living-law norms" Northrop attributes the failure of the greater number of nations which are members of the Council of Europe to endow that organization with supranational capacities. The weakening of Western European impetus toward unity is blamed by the author on the "tragic failure" of the Eisenhower Administration, which, by electoral and post-electoral statements and actions, seemingly indicated American intentions of turning defensive military arrangements into a crusading force to liberate Eastern Europe.

Those of us who are prepared to support the proposition that Western European security and progress necessitate close cooperation among the countries of the area, including West Germany, and that the United State can and should adopt measures whic would result in intensifying that co operation are indebted to Professo Northrop for his effort. Certainl there is both room and need for book which increases public aware ness of the stake which the Unite States has in Western Europe. Pro fessor Northrop has gone further, in dicating some of the fundamental con ditions which must obtain if Weste European cooperation is not to weake as the palpable threat from the Sovi Union diminishes.

CANDOR, however, compels the ad dition that the reviewer found sever things which disturbed him in th book. It may, for example, be debate whether "sociological jurisprudence is a "science" or in fact much mor than a convenient label for the ex amination of the relationship betwee legal forms and the structure and com position of various societies. The tw are related; of that we may be sur The crux of the matter, of course, lie in delineating as precisely as possibl the nature of the relationship. It woul not appear that Professor Northro has taken us very far in this difficu endeavor. In fact his basic conclusio that legal forms to be effective *mu be compatible* with social forms open to serious question.

The reviewer would argue that is not necessary to carry the afore mentioned contraption into the type o popular exposition with which Pro fessor Northrop concerns himsel Without his voluntarily assumed bur den the author might have been abl to avoid the frequent pitfalls of te dious repetition, unintentional truism single-track causation, non-sequitur and errors which diminish the con tribution of the book. Most question able are the contentions that the for eign policy of the United States stand or falls with EDC and that the Eisen hower Administration is solely re sponsible for the rise of Europea neutralism. The second is unfair i its neglect of contributory develop ments in France; the first illustrate the rapid obsolescence which the au thor's form of analysis has inflicted o his published product. The quick ac tion of Western European, Englis and American leaders may in tim reveal that security and progress ca be attained without creating any su pranational structure on the Contine



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International Relations for All

***Common Sense and World Affairs," by Dorothy Fosdick** (Harcourt, Brace. 207 pp. $3.50), is a discussion, intended for laymen, of our present foreign policy by a former member of the Policy Planning Staff of the State Department. Frank Altschul, who reviews it here, is director of the Council on Foreign Relations.*

By Frank Altschul

DOROTHY FOSDICK'S "Common Sense and World Affairs" is addressed to the layman. Written in simple, understandable, and frequently epigrammatic prose, it should have wide appeal. It is based on the notion, once more generally accepted, that in a democracy such as ours an informed public opinion offers the best background for the formulation of a sound foreign policy. One might be tempted to question the view expressed that the ever-growing body of "classified information" does not preclude a regular reader of such a newspaper as *The New York Times* from arriving at wise and acceptable judgments. Yet as a supplement to the information gathered from the daily press Miss Fosdick has made a notable contribution to popular enlightenment on a number of key issues.

For example, the illusion of "world government" is neatly disposed of in this manner: "There must be a consensus on the custom and law to be enforced, so that the rules of the game are understood and accepted. To push political boundaries beyond the limits of such consensus is to court tyranny, or then to have even a minimum of order one part of the community must impose its law upon the other part. Assuming today a world government, with a world legislature, a world court, and a world executive, what system of justice would prevail? Would it be the Soviet or the American system, the Indian or Yugoslav system? . . . . If one section of the world were being forced against its will to submit to an alien law the world government would be a tyranny."

In similar fashion Miss Fosdick points out that "the idea of European federation," which "has a peculiar fascination for Americans," represents more an aspiration than a realistic or immediate objective of policy. "It would be a disaster for Europe to federate before there is a basis for effective federal institutions on the ground in Europe itself and not simply in the minds of well-meaning Americans. In this respect the Europeans are wise to feel their way rather than to take anybody else's word for it. . . . European union may in time prove a desirable and possible form of organization for Europe. For an indefinite time such organization will fall considerably short of full federation of a united Europe." And she adds the cautionary notes: "Any preference for a still remote project should not cause us to discount or discourage the more limited advances Europe is actually making."

Particularly illuminating is Miss Fosdick's discussion of "the national interest." Those who have espoused this as an element of prime importance in the development of foreign policy have often been misunderstood and frequently unjustly criticized. As Miss Fosdick remarks, "Americans cloud their reputation for wisdom when they claim we are less concerned with our interests than are other nations with theirs—that we are more generous and virtuous. For we, no less than other nations, are trying to discover and to promote our national interest." In our case, having no aggressive or imperialistic aims, desiring nothing more passionately for ourselves as well as for others than that peace with justice to which in this age of nuclear weapons there is no longer any sane alternative, we feel that in seeking to promote the national interest we are in fact serving the interest of much of mankind. We rejoice that the national interest, as we view it, is colored by a certain native idealism. But in fairness we should recognize this as merely a fortuitous circumstance rooted in a particular moment of history.

—*Miller.*

Dorothy Fosdick—"talent, wisdom."

IN A volume permeated with common sense, as its title implies, Miss Fosdick goes to some pains to indicate the unfortunate effect which ill-considered behavior at home may have on the execution of the most soundly conceived foreign policy. A review far too brief to do justice to this stimulating book should in no event fail to echo these warning notes: "The blatant disregard for truth, the increase in calumny and bigotry, the challenge to constitutional restraints, and the absence of resolute leadership are producing an ugly situation. . . . We can refrain from substituting vituperation for debate, denunciation for evidence. Important as it is to identify and examine both *past* and *current* mistakes we should be able to do this without wholesale condemnation of either the patriotism or the integrity of the officials concerned."

A number of books written by former members of the Policy Planning Staff of the Department of State, of which Dorothy Fosdick's is the most recent, leave one with a feeling of regret that the exigencies of party politics should deprive our Government of so much talent, wisdom, and experience. Presumably this is inevitable whenever the foreign policy of an outgoing Administration had been bitterly challenged in the course of a Presidential campaign. Surely an incoming Secretary of State is entitled to advisers in sympathy with his approach to the perplexing problems with which he must deal. Yet the loss seems all the more striking when, as in the present instance, the brave new policies so well advertised in campaign oratory seem increasingly to resemble in their major aspects the much criticized line which they were supposed to replace.

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The Saturday Review

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Mr. Smith Went to Washington

NEVER procrastinate, never lose your temper! These two excellent rules for a journalist's behavior were broken by a member of the editorial staff of *The Saturday Review* about a month ago with consequences that neither he nor the heads of the capable and overworked staff of the Library of Congress are likely to forget for a long time. On November 3 *The Saturday Review*'s Mr. Smith was delighted to receive a letter from L. Quincy Mumford, Librarian of Congress, asking him to take part in a three-sided discussion of Sinclair Lewis's "Main Street" to be broadcast during the interlude in one of the Friday night chamber-music concerts in the Library's Coolidge Auditorium. "Our staff," Mr. Mumford wrote, "would assume the burden of preparing the script," and would (at some unspecified date) "submit a draft version for your revision in advance of the recording." A tape-recording of the program would be used sometime next spring over the Good Music FM Radio Network.

Mr. Smith promptly accepted the honor of discussing "Main Street" with Mr. Mumford and Dr. Joseph P. Blickensderfer, editor of the Library's *United States Quarterly Book Review*. He assumed that he would receive instructions and advice for his part in the affair since it would be necessary to avoid repetitions. Early in his career he had been a reporter on the *New York Tribune*. Reporters are not expected to be naive, and he now pleads guilty to misunderstanding Mr. Mumford's letter. He was perplexed by the statement that the Library "would submit a draft version for a revision in advance of the recording." Was he supposed to revise his own speech, which he had not yet written? And why should an overworked librarian assume the burden of "preparing a script on the basis of Mr. Smith's comments and directions"? At any rate, spring seemed a long way off to a reasonably busy man. He decided to wait.

On December 10 he received from Henry J. Dubester, Chief, General Reference and Bibliographical Division of the Library, the complete script of the "symposium," including Mr. Smith's own ghost-written share in the performance. He was, thoughtfully, allowed to revise, alter, and otherwise trim the sentences attributed to him. As he read what would be presumed to be his own words and ideas he did, indeed, lose his temper! He promptly wrote Mr. Mumford that he felt that he was competent to express his own opinions concerning Sinclair Lewis and "Main Street," and wired Mr. Dubester that he declined to come to Washington to deliver words written by someone else on any subject, much less one he knew as well as this one. It was not necessary to add that he had been a friend of Mr. Lewis for many years, since he was to be introduced by Mr. Mumford as a former publishing associate of Sinclair Lewis and the editor of a book of Lewis letters, "From Main Street to Stockholm: 1919-1930." It is difficult for any writer or editor to remain silent when he is deeply stirred by anything that reflects on the honesty of his profession, so Mr. Smith was not surprised when he found a report of his dispute with the Library of Congress in *The New York Times* the next morning, though he was startled to discover that it had landed on the front page, with the headline "Editor Resents 'Ghost Writing' by U. S.; Quits Program When Library of Congress Pens Line for Him" standing beside reproduction of his own and Mr. Mumford' features.

THERE were several reasons wh for the next ten days or more, th press throughout the country, includ ing columnists, editorial writers, an syndicated article writers, took up thi story, in which Mr. Smith to his pro found embarrassment was told that i was an act of courage to have dare to beard any Government lion, an especially our revered national library He was also told that he should no have "taken his shirt off," "blown hi top," or started a "tempest in a teapot.

It was obvious from newspaper clip pings and letters he received that great number of people were honestly disturbed by the common practice o ghost-writing on all levels, from book to hand-made speeches. It was als obvious that it was not only a neces sary but reasonably honest profession when the ghost was conversant with the opinions of his employer, whethe he was a businessman forced to ad dress too many associations and ban quets or a politician. Nevertheless Dorothy Thompson in her syndicated column was right when she wrote tha "the matter, apparently trivial, in volves principle and honesty. Ghost writers and their mouthpieces con tribute to perpetuate a fraud upon the public. It is so common today tha one can almost say that our thought are guided by ghosts. . . . Ghost-writing undoubtedly influences the mind of the country's Charlie McCarthys.

Mr. Smith's argument with the Library of Congress ended peacefully and happily for him, at least. In the midst of the teapot tempest he wrote Mr. Mumford that he would be glad to come to Washington, with his own remarks on "Main Street," sandwiched in between those of his two distinguished collaborators in the symposium. He arrived in Washington last week, was the Library's guest at a luncheon held in the marbled splendor of a majestic room in the fine old building, and later had the pleasure of hearing Mr. Mumford's, Dr. Blickensderfer's, and his own words returning to him from a tape-recorder He returned to New York filled with admiration for the talented men he had been privileged to meet, for the great and invaluable institution they serve, and for the kindness with which they received their uncomfortable guest.

—H. S.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

INADEQUATE CRITERIA FOR THE PRESS

THE ARTICLE "Newspapers Shouldn't Play God," by Herbert Brucker [*SR* Jan. 1], was excellent as far as it went. The examples cited from the author's personal experience of his refusal to suppress a story were interesting and compel agreement with his decision. Newspapers are an unquestioned bulwark of freedom and I agree that slanting and suppressing of the news can lead into troubled waters. But, because we are ill equipped to play God, do we necessarily conclude that the truth of a story justifies its appearance in print? Only two obvious exceptions are admitted by the author: the names of juvenile offenders and matters of national security. We must go further: responsible journalism demands that certain individual rights of privacy be recognized. It implies restraint.

What, for example, is the good served by splashing on the front page a picture of a mother's anguished moment when she first views the body of her dead child at the scene of an automobile accident? Newspaper friends tell me this will deter reckless drivers, debatable at best. But if this were true would not a picture of the accident do as well? In such a display of intimate emotion the individual, guiltless by any test (curiously, the author's examples all involve guilt), has a right to privacy that is superior to the newspaper's duty and function.

WINSTON BROADFOOT.

Houston, Tex.

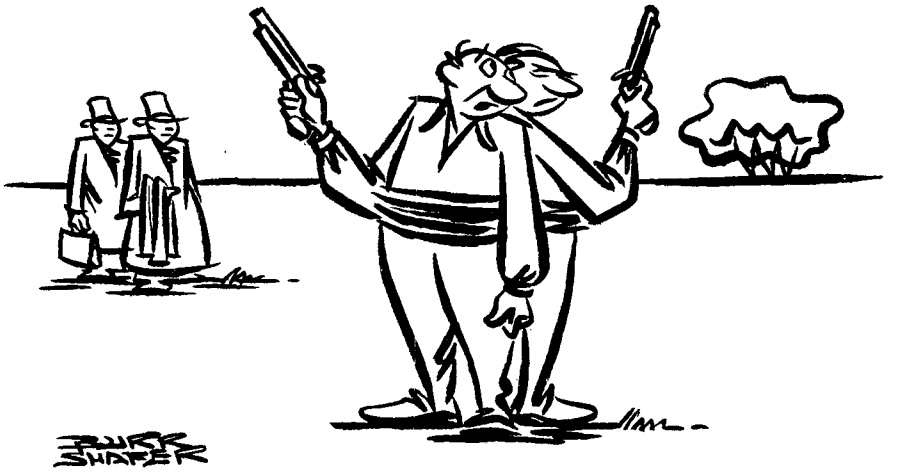
THE ANALYSIS OF GRAHAM GREENE

CERTAINLY there is a pitiable need for requiem comment concerning Graham Greene's play "The Living Room." Particularly when John Mason Brown helps revive the distasteful cliches which greeted the play [SEEING THINGS, *SR* Dec. 18].

He states, after mentioning Greene's religious conversion, that "instead of enjoying the spiritual peace which heals, he [Greene] is tormented by a mind and spirit still at war." The review then extends this critique to the play as a whole. And thus, in brief but steady strokes, Mr. Brown unwittingly justifies a rationale that must plague us all in these days of mounting irrationalism. For religion, society's binding force, has ceased to be the classic struggle between sin and grace, the Christian interpretation of redemption between the self and God. Our compassion for man, the compassion Brown feels Greene lacks, is but a superficial and ancillary acknowledgment, since we have so successfully robbed the individual of his uniqueness in terms of Christian revelation. Instead, we find ourselves advocates of a peace-of-soul, peace-of-mind cultus, the sincerity of which becomes more egoistic as some statesmen utilize it as a Government property in the war against our enemies. It follows that since we are now "spiritual" we are, therefore, supreme in the battle for power and the mind of man. What a pithy commentary on our national culture is revealed through the juxtaposition of political bravura and religious saccharine! So forceful is it, indeed, that we can barely perceive that lurking under the charivari lies true faith, born of anguish and analysis—Greene's kind, not Brown's.

J. R. CATINELLA.

Forest Hills, N. Y.



THROUGH HISTORY WITH J. WESLEY SMITH

"I don't feel very insulted this morning, do you?"

HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN

I READ with deep delight Rumer Godden's tribute to my favorite, Hans Christian Andersen ["Last of the Great Fairytalers," *SR* Dec. 25], whose stories I have loved from nursery days to grandmotherhood. As she well says, they are both poems and parables, with their roots in eternal truths. Clothed in colors of enchantment, with the rhythm of birds in flight, they become embedded in the child's soul, though it will be many years before their ultimate meaning comes to him. I have been tempted more than once to send the chairman of an over-zealous Congressional Committee a copy of "The Emperor's New Clothes."

MARGARET LEE SOUTHARD.

Hingham, Mass.

MOST ORIGINAL

CONGRATULATIONS to you and the author on your "Last of the Great Fairytalers" by Rumer Godden. It is adult, sympathetic, and revealing, giving a "slant" on Andersen's work that, to this reader, is most original. It is as fine a piece of creative criticism as I have read.

ARTHUR S. BOURINOT.

Rockcliffe, Ottawa.

TOO MANY PEEPULS

IN PROFESSOR Harold H. Smith's article "Education and the Control of Evolution" [*SR* Jan. 8] is the following typo: "The present world annual rate of increase is over 7 per cent . . ." Of course, this should read "1 per cent" instead of "7 per cent." Let's not have another case of Mencken and the bathtub.

JOHN R. MINER, M.D.

Rochester, Minn.

THE SUN IN DECEMBER

IN THE EDITOR'S note before "Christ vs. Socrates" [*SR* Dec. 18]: "December 25 approximates the winter solstice, when the sun ceases its northward motion and begins to descend again . . ." I think that you will agree that quite the opposite is true. It is at about this time that the sun ceases its southward motion, not its northward.

In the same editor's note on page 7: ". . . for Christians the point of the day must be that it is the birthday of Christ." I think that it is generally agreed that Christ was born sometime in January but that because of a change in the calendar His birthday is celebrated on December 25.

R. W. SAYLES.

Sandy Hook, Conn.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Not only did* SR *move the sun, rather than describe the complicated movements of the earth around the sun, but we moved it the wrong way. Of course, the sun ceases its* southward *motion after the winter solstice. As there is no historical record whatever of Christ's life, there is no agreement on His birthday. In different sections of the Primitive Church days in November, December, January, February, and even April were all celebrated as "Christmas." The first certain mention of the December 25 convention is in the middle of the fourth century, but St. Chrysostom (in a sermon about 385) testifies that December 25 has been kept as the feast of Christmas in the West from the beginning.*

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BROADWAY POSTSCRIPT

Off-Rialto Theatre

IF THERE are still skeptics as to the superiority of the Elizabethan-type stage over our conventional prosceniums a visit to two off-Broadway Shakespeare revivals is recommended.

At the Jan Hus House Auditorium, 351 East 74th Street, Donald Goldman and the Shakespearewrights are presenting **"Twelfth Night"** on a large wedge-shaped platform surrounded by audience on three sides. While their crudely renovated basement does not have the advantage of properly banked seats or stairs and upper levels, it still permits this group of young actors to give a lively and intelligent performance of the Shakespeare comedy. Neglecting subtlety for clarity, and melodic speech for simple emotional directness, these players enlist your sympathy, if not always your attention. Thomas Barbour, as a snobbish Malvolio, is particularly sharp when he reads the mysterious *billet-doux;* Laurie Vendig is winningly fallible as a Viola who never quite believes her disguise is working; and Inga Swenson is sufficiently pretty as Olivia to engender lovesickness in a dozen dukes. Director Donald Peck uses his stage boldly, and except for an incomprehensible shipwreck scene the evening is unencumbered merriment.

Less satisfying but equally instructive is the other half of the picture —the Club Theatre production of **"The Merchant of Venice,"** playing week-ends at the Finch College Theatre, 52 East 78th Street. Here, on a narrow and shallow proscenium stage, a cast of actors more experienced than the Shakespearewright group becomes tangled in a web of conventional stagecraft, and is hobbled by an impractical unit-set platform that clutters the stage and restricts the action. In a well-intentioned but ill-advised effort to enhance the play director Iza Itkin has given it the kiss of Commedia dell'Arte, even adding a mute white clown to the cast. Except for the veteran Clarence Derwent the readings tend to be choppy and the action episodic. Finally, the compulsion of actors to react to each other visibly on every phrase doesn't help matters.

The evening is not entirely without positive virtues. There are some splendidly funny bits in the choosing of the caskets, and Whitford Kane's brief characterization as the old blind Gobbo is drawn from the earth. Mr. Derwent has some magnificent moments of frenzy following Shylock's betrayal by his own daughter, and his whole interpretation of Shylock as a completely sympathetic character in the Sir Henry Irving tradition will, if it does nothing else, cause you to wonder why it doesn't work.

With Shylock's spleen removed, the trial seems a stupid miscarriage of justice. And since Shakespeare, not foreseeing Messrs. Irving and Derwent, neglected to give Shylock any rebuttal one's emotions are not appreciably aroused for either Antonio or Shylock. The one tool left for expression of Shylock's tragedy is movement, but Mr. Derwent's slow head-down exit must be made in two feet of space. Thus it smacks more of a professional pallbearer than of a deeply wronged man. To boot, the final scene of rejoicing becomes meaningless if injustice to Shylock is what is being celebrated. Certainly, if one wishes to interpret the play in this way the rejoicing must then be bitterly satirical as it is in the epilogue to "The Caine Mutiny Court-Martial."

By coincidence, George Bernard Shaw, who most outspokenly attacked the Irving interpretation of Shylock, is currently represented with a Phoenix Theatre production of **"The Doctor's Dilemma."** For, in this play, a Jewish doctor says, "When an Englishman borrows, all he knows or cares is that he wants money; he'll sign anything to get it, without in the least understanding it, or intending to carry out the agreement if it turns out badly for him. In fact, he thinks you a cad if you ask him to carry it out under such circumstances. Just like 'The Merchant of Venice,' you know. But if a Jew makes an agreement, he means to keep it and expects you to keep it. If he wants money for a time, he borrows it and knows he must pay it at the end of the time. If he knows he can't pay, he begs it as a gift." Thus, Shaw the playwright seems to contradict Shaw the drama critic. "The Doctor's Dilemma" contains other puzzles. Of course, the attack on the medical profession is quite clear and follows the Shavian line beautifully. Shaw gives us six different doctors, not one of whom believes very much in the ability of any other, but each of whom will on occasion recommend any of the others to an unwanted patient. It is significant that in the forty years since the play was written nothing has happened within the medical profession to date Shaw's quips. But where Shaw puzzles us is in his seeming endorsement of Louis Dubedat, an immoral artist who excuses his blackmail and his bigamy by the beauty he brings into the world. When the doctor is asked which is preferable, a world of good pictures and bad men or vice versa, he chooses the former. Although Shaw's purpose seems to be merely the using of Dubedat's common-sense immorality to attack the doctor's unreasoned morality, it suggests the Marxist doctrine that real morality is only possible once a classless society is achieved.

Under Sidney Lumet's direction the Phoenix production is a faithful one that makes Shaw's points and is yet peopled with human beings. The drawback is perhaps that in *acting* human beings they do not always *perform* Shaw at his highest pitch. Each actor seems to fall short to the same extent as his personality falls short. The two most interesting performances are Roddy MacDowall's volatile Dubedat and Frederick Worlock's bumbling Sir Ralph Bloomfield Bonington, whose *potpourri* of scrambled misquoted Shakespeare provides a sarcastic demonstration of what the bard means to the average man.

While this "The Doctor's Dilemma" leaves something to be desired, it is probably the only satisfactory production we will see for a long time of one of Shaw's best and hardiest plays.

Andre Obey's **"Noah"** is being presented Sunday afternoons at the Broadway Tabernacle, 56th St. and Broadway. Arthur Wilmart's translation has been shortened and amended and the result is a much less subtle play than the original, and one in which the nature of the controversy between Noah and his children does not have time to build up comprehensibly. Yet it serves very well as a half-sermon, half-narrative in a church setting.

Similarly the Greenwich Mews production of William Branch's **"In Splendid Error"** is a stirring history of the John Brown legend told through the story of his association with Frederick Douglass, the Negro Abolitionist. More than that, this play as acted by the magnificently equipped William Marshall explores the area between heroic reform and subversive revolution. This makes "In Splendid Error" stimulating theatre and a play to be revived by interracial groups everywhere. —HENRY HEWES.

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SR GOES TO THE MOVIES

The Damp Art of Movieselling

ADD to your cinematic lexicon, if it isn't there already, the word junket." In movie parlance a junket is a special trip organized by a studio for the sole purpose of gaining extra attention for one or more of its pictures. Junketeers may actually see the film, but generally that is far less important than letting the public at large know that the picture exists. Junketing is a game that any number can play, dependent on the generosity of the producers and the amount of space they hope to grab off for their effort. Their generosity, at once lavish and calculated, is frequently spread even further through a device known as the "tie-in"—gifts for the junketeers that in some way tie-in to the theme of the picture.

Recently RKO organized a junket that might, in almost every respect, serve as the model for all such jaunts, a junket primer on the fine art of selling a film (which sometimes seems more skilfully developed than the fine art of making them). The reason for this junket was obvious, even before the film had been seen. At a time when the screen seemed suddenly teeming with stories set under the sea, Howard Hughes was ready to release a picture called simply **"Underwater!"** Furthermore, although it cost probably somewhere between an unofficially estimated $2,000,000 and the studio announced $3,000,000, precious few of those dollars were visible in the completed film. Material shot in Hawaii, scenes taken in the Caribbean, all had to be scrapped and the film remade in a specially constructed tank on the RKO lot in Hollywood. Clearly, something had to be done to get audiences to see, not simply a film shot under water, but a film *called* "Underwater!" Hence the junket.

Every junket needs a gimmick, a trick, a device to make it newsworthy. Someone in RKO's publicity department had the perfect solution, a positive inspiration: Stage the premiere under water! And then invite to it all the newspapermen, magazine writers, photographers, wire services, radio and TV people—with a sprinkling of personalities (stars, starlets, and governors) thrown in to lend glamour. And photographic fodder.

Whatever wheels are required for this sort of thing were set in motion. Although at no time were the crystal-clear waters of Florida's Silver Springs utilized for location shooting on the film, Silver Springs was selected as the site for its unveiling. A screen was set up in twenty feet of water and benches submerged to accommodate the aquatic audience. A glass-bottomed boat was converted into an underwater projection booth. Aqualung equipment was borrowed from the Air Force and other sources to make it possible for the spectators to remain submerged long enough to acquire some impression of the film from their unaccustomed seat.

Then came the tie-ins. The Jantzen people could supply bathing suits, another firm the diving equipment. Timex had a wrist-watch that worked under water. A ball-point pen concern was also set to distribute samples of its wares, but seems to have backed away at the last minute from this unprecedented opportunity to test its favorite advertising slogan. And, since Howard Hughes owns not only RKO but also TWA, the main transportation problem was solved by still another tie-in.

The great event was planned—if not always executed—with the precision of an Army maneuver. Two Super-Constellations flew south from New York, landing at Jacksonville; two flew east from Hollywood, touching down at Tampa. Police escorts cleared the way for the buses convoying each group the hundred miles from airport to premiere. (Police leading the New Yorkers, however, missed a turn along the way and they were at least an extra half-hour late in getting in.) A cocktail party greeted them, followed by an advertising man's dream of a real Southern dinner—fried chicken, collard greens, corn bread, and blackstrap molasses. The California contingent, arriving two hours later, got the same reception in reverse. The bar remained open until 2 a.m.

Next day was devoted to preparations for the premiere. Diving equipment was demonstrated and explained—with pretty starlets on hand to do the demonstrating and oblige the photographers. Debbie Reynolds made a brief appearance on the beach. More photographers. In the afternoon, to make sure that everyone saw the picture high water or no, buses transported the crowd to nearby Ocala and the film was shown in an ordinary

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theatre. (A note on the schedule of events stated that the bar would remain open during the underwater screening, a clear indication that no one was expected to see the picture through in an aqua-lung.)

The underwater showing of "Underwater!" was announced for 8:30, but by this time very few were taking the schedule seriously. It actually got under way about ten, preceded by frantic photographing of first Richard Egan, then Jane Russell entering the water, camera and radio interviews with everyone in sight, and the press invitees quietly turning blue as they waited the word to plunge beneath the surface and view again the film they had seen a few hours earlier. But finally even the insatiable studio photographers had their fill. With a great flailing of flippers, the sturdier souls ducked under and the picture began.

What they saw, in the blue-tinged depths, was a pleasant, reasonably exciting drama about deep-sea treasure divers. Embellished with sunken wrecks, a desperate fight with sharks, and Jane Russell in a Bikini (Johnson office version), the film succeeded in sustaining the interest of at least a handful of white-capped park attendants, who continued to view it through special sub-marine portholes right through to the final frame. But the main work had now been done. The newsmen were thronging the press room, tapping out special dispatches. The photos were already on the wires. Motion-picture film was sent on to Miami for presentation the following evening on a nation-wide television show. The bar closed promptly at 12.

* * *

"Bad Day at Black Rock" (M-G-M), which was also directed by John Sturges, emerges in this day of the torpid, two-hour super-spectacle as a refreshingly taut and surprisingly thoughtful little melodrama. A train stops in the tiny, sun-baked Western town of Black Rock, the first to do so in four years, and Spencer Tracy steps off. Immediately the atmosphere is charged with suspicion of the stranger. Shortly after Pearl Harbor a Japanese farmer had been murdered there, and the townspeople clearly want no outside investigation. Tracy's mild questions are ignored.

Sturges, aided by a strong script by Millard Kaufman, keeps the suggestion of violence always flickering about the edges of his story. He is like a fighter with a strong left cocked and ready to deliver. When violence does break out it is swift and staggering in its impact—a release of tension for the entire audience. Kaufman's lines are, at times, too stilted, Sturges's photographic compositions too studied. But occasionally a speech rings true with the lean, poetic truth of a line by Hemingway, or a scene captures the leathery, weatherbeaten feel of Western faces and Western towns like Thomas Benton used to do. This sort of thing doesn't happen in movies very often. —ARTHUR KNIGHT.

Your Literary I. Q.

Conducted by John T. Winterich

STANDING ROOM ONLY

Helen Pettigrew of Charleston, Arkansas, submits a dozen scraps of American and English verse in which something or somebody stands, stood, or plans to stand on or near something or somebody else. She asks you to identify the works cited and to name the authors. If, of the twenty-four data demanded, you glean fewer than sixteen, go stand in the corner on one foot for fifteen minutes; from sixteen through twenty, same on both feet for five minutes; above twenty, have a chair. Answers on page 28.

1. The boy stood on the burning deck.
2. On a little mound, Napoleon
   Stood on our storming day.
3. I stood on the bridge at midnight.
4. Lo, I will stand at thy right hand.
5. Here once the embattled farmers stood.
6. Still stands Thine ancient sacrifice.
7. Long I stood there wondering, fearing.
8. I stood in Venice on the Bridge of Sighs.
9. They also serve who only stand and wait.
10. The wide-spreading pond and the mill that stood by it.
11. So might I, standing on this pleasant lea.
12. But sturdy and staunch he stands.

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TV AND RADIO

A.B. vs. Aristocracy

I CONTINUE to be concerned about the image that American Business presents of itself on television. A.B.—like Secretary of Defense Charles E. Wilson—has a way of putting its paw in it. Shortly after the New Year began, on a Sunday when the newspapers traditionally publish their Annual Review and Forecast of Industry sections, most of the TV channels transmitted, at different times through the day, "Future of America," a special half-hour film presented by the Advertising Council, self-styled "Task Force of American Business for Public Service." The film featured industrialist Paul Hoffman, a professional narrator, and babies—four million new ones every year (that's what the nation is getting). Look into America's future, the film held, and you will see your own, burgeoning in the bosom of America's great baby boom.

Four million babies annually mean more homes, schools, stores, steel, oil, gas, light, presses, etc. So ran the argument. Our expanding diaper economy means more machines, jobs, shorter hours, higher pay, lower prices. Marching under the banner of the safety pin, the American standard of living will continue to lead the world. Somewhat as small wolves skulking around the big crib, the shadow of the atom was cast, and that of "automation" too (the new technological term for factories that are run automatically). But isotopes-for-peace banished the specter of nuclear destruction, and economics exorcized the threat of automation to employment by demonstrating, out of technological history, that new machines *inevitably* make more jobs than they displace. It was a hurrah-for-our-side, a faith-for-free-men pep talk, of which A.B. has always been very fond, especially at New Years and anniversaries. And, like all A.B. programs I have seen on TV (I mean "all"—not most or generally or several), it was fragrant with what the Greeks termed *hubris* (pride), the fatal sin of individuals and societies.

But this was not where the foot went into the mouth. We are young as a nation, and our record is remarkable: time and history may forgive us our arrogance. The offense of "Future of America" was against men, not fate. "We may make some mistakes," the film admitted grudgingly. "There may be some waste; but our expanding economy can contain a few errors." The film clips illustrating the "mistakes" showed a man holding eroded, wind-blown earth. I thought of all the dust-bowl farmers in the Thirties. I saw nameless men in industry as well as in farming, and their families, riding out intimate misfortunes on the turbulent crests of industrial change.

I think this is more than just a matter of an isolated sentence or two that might have been deleted by a sensitive editor or director. I think that unfortunate statement epitomizes a subconscious attitude, a set of mind, an approach which characterizes business programs on the air. It expresses itself inevitably in statistical, quantitative, one-dimensional creative failures such as "Future of America." It cannot represent the true face of American business. It certainly does not represent the face of individuality, of the democratic aspiration. Worse, it summons up what Dr. J. Robert Oppenheimer has called "the bleak face of unhumanity." In its glorification of mass satisfactions, in its praise with the lips for the individual but its doctrinaire disregard of him with the heart, it suggests the state monolithic. "The better you know America," the program said, "the better your future looks." Would they had put it the other way around. "The better your future looks, the better you know America."

ALMOST at the same hour in which the Advertising Council was blowing the American Business Horn, "making democracy stronger and more efficient," Sir Osbert Sitwell, the English poet and author, was maintaining on NBC (in the first of the new season's very welcome, filmed "Conversations with Elder Wise Men") that "modern society could hardly look worse," and that "the ultimate direction of democracy is the police state," where the common man will "put away the artists." He also read from his poem "Personal Prejudices": "I hate the voices of the crowd. I hate the million readers, but love their money." A while later he read from his prose work "Letter to My Son" this advice to young artists (freely quoted as heard over the loudspeaker): "If the artist is enslaved, then charge the foe. Loudly demand that the Philistines should be obliged to suffer art courses: to listen to Beethoven quartets at mealtime; and to have no radio . . ." "I love speech to be bitter as a blade," he declared: and "the truth cannot be told to the common man."

Thus spake Sir Osbert, cynically, urbanely, wittily for thirty absorbing, delightful minutes. His "conversational guest," Samuel Chotzinoff, an NBC music executive, fed the lion his cues. The den was Renishaw Hall, the Sitwell ancestral seat near London. White hair, long, thin face, high forehead, fixed gaze, unsmiling mouth, yet with gentle irony playing about, the avowed literary aristocrat seemed to fulfil vividly in maturity his poet-sister Edith's description of him as a child in one of her poems:

> And Dagobert my brother whose large strength
> Great body and brave beauty still reflect
> The Angevin dead kings from whom we spring.

"If I were a rich man, I'd enjoy a professional praiser," Sir Osbert told Mr. Chotzinoff; and he relished his guest's encomiums as well as those which he unblushingly bestowed upon himself. But he was as flashing as he was brittle, and beautifully self-revealing. His literary preferences came as no surprise. After Sitwell he admired James Joyce, "because he made an attempt at a big thing ("Ulysses") and really brought it off"; T. S. Eliot, because his "Wasteland" managed to "synthesize and explain the troubles of the modern world"; and D. H. Lawrence, because "he was a master of short-story writing." His epigrams were most satisfactory: an example—"However true the facts may be, they have to be recreated to seem true."

Only once did he require a pause to think before answering a question. When asked what he thought of the future direction of literature he responded: "Critics always say literature is decaying. It depends on the bombs. As long as there is human life there will be books." Which, after all, is a definite affirmation from an apostle of doom. The poet may talk of death, but what he really means is life. This contradiction is his vitality, his charm, his individuality. This individuality, this vivid humanity, this sense of color, feeling, and beauty made the deprecator of "the million readers" very vibrant and alive to the common legion of television viewers fortunate enough to see and hear him. The absence of this essential humanity made "Future of America" brash, hollow, and dull. How odd that a hymn to democracy should be so cold—and its elegy by an aristocrat so warm!—ROBERT LEWIS SHAYON.

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Americana

Continued from page 12

chapter with a general statement of the authorities on which it rests.

What to do about documenting a text is still very much a vexed question, a three-cornered warfare being carried on among writers, publishers, and readers. I don't know that it has ever been demonstrated that "the general reader" actually is repelled by a footnoted page, but the recent tendency in general publishing has been to relegate all notes to an appendix. This may be all very well, but if the notes have any value at all readers will soon be found browsing in them and then seeking to refer back to the text to which they apply. It would be cruel and inhuman punishment, but I would like to sentence Doubleday's book designer to forty-eight hours with the notes to Mr. Lavender's book. I think the effect would be salutary; at the very least, next time he would supply running heads to the main text, and he, like myself, might be able to think of still other improvements.

Dangerous Dentist

***"Doc Holliday," by John Myers Myers** (Little, Brown. 287 pp. $4.50), is the biography of a dentist-turned-gambler, one of the men who made the Old West wild.*

By Seth Agnew

BACK in the days when the West was wild, back in the Seventies and Eighties when such towns as Leadville and Denver and Cheyenne and Tombstone were young and lusty, one of the outstanding figures in that portion of the scene which comprised the saloons, gambling palaces, bordellos was a tubercular dentist named John H. Holliday—Doc Holliday, reputedly one of the best gamblers in the West, a cool and deadly hand with a gun, sometime killer and crook, sometime staunch ally of the law in its war against crooks and killers.

The ascertainable facts of the dentist-turned-gambler's life are told by John Myers Myers in "Doc Holliday." Holliday was born in 1852 near Valdosta, Georgia, to a prominent local family. The Civil War and Reconstruction strengthened his unruly tendencies, and when the medical pronouncement of tuberculosis ended his Georgia dental practice in 1872 he was ready to move West.

Dallas was the first stop. Here for a while he practised dentistry, but more important to his later career he practised the handling of cards and of the knife and gun. Here, too, in a gambling argument he killed his first man—and left town in a hurry. In 1887 he died of tuberculosis in Glenwood Springs.

Following the gambling circuit, dealing faro and monte and poker, Doc saw all the big towns of the West and was run out of most of them. He knew such prominent figures of the times as Ed and Pat Masterson, Luke Short, Bill Tilghman, the actor Eddie Foy; others on both sides of the law rejoiced in such names as Mysterious Dave Mather, Turkey Creek Jack Johnson, Curly Bill Brocius. At the Flat near Fort Griffin, Texas, he formed his alliance with Big Nose Kate, a free-lance prostitute of uncertain surname. Kate saved Doc's life when the citizenry of the Flat would have hanged him for the killing of one Ed Bailey: she set a diversionary fire at one end of town and then held up the jailer and freed her friend. Kate and Doc fled to Dodge City, and Kate was a plague to his life thereafter.

To be sure, much of Mr. Myers's story rests on supposition and educated guessing, for the annals of the West are scant and contradictory. The tales of self-styled eye-witnesses and of men who "knew the Doctor well" suffer from the notorious ability of the old-time Westerner to tell a thrilling story without letting the facts get too much in the way. Newspaper accounts which have survived tend to be cheerfully partisan. But though Doc Holliday's life must be pieced together a little loosely, which Mr. Myers is the first to admit, all credit to Mr. Myers for making it logical and credible.

Credit, too, to Mr. Myers for reinforcing his story with a mine of information about the sporting side of the Western boom towns, the operation of the gambling circuit, and the colorful characters who rode it. It makes a fascinating, if not particularly moral, narrative; and Mr. Myers tells it with gusto.

LITERARY I.Q. ANSWERS

1. "Casablanca" (Felicia Hemans). 2. "Incident of the French Camp" (Robert Browning). 3. "The Bridge" (Longfellow). 4. "Horatius at the Bridge" (Macaulay). 5. "Concord Hymn" (Emerson). 6. "Recessional" (Kipling). 7. "The Raven" (Poe). 8. "Childe Harold's Pilgrimage" (Byron). 9. Sonnet: "On His Blindness" (Milton). 10. "The Bucket" (Woodworth). 11. Sonnet: "The world is too much with us" (Wordsworth). 12. "Little Boy Blue" (Eugene Field).

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Fiction

Continued from page 16

nnounced in the title, of death. Of vhat use is life to men condemned o die? In the eyes of the immortal Tosca all their efforts are in vain, heir errors and accomplishments too ephemeral to matter. In his presence hey know with humiliation and despair that they are but blades of grass. Why do they struggle even vhen they realize that all is for naught? Several of the characters rticulate responses that will stir even eaders who couldn't care less about he ethical implications of Existenialism.

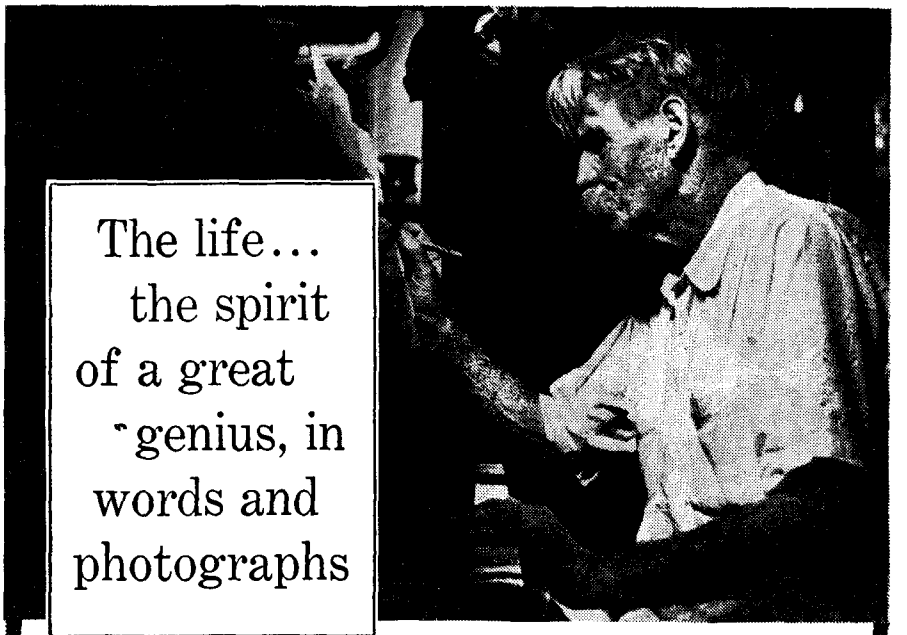
French critics did not praise Mme. Beauvoir's work without reservations. A work conceived artificially to illustrate a thesis, it never comes to life. Too many repetitious episodes, too much harping, and too, too long. But ussing about such literary matters s like complaining that a woman professor's lipstick is not on straight. t is much more interesting just to vatch the brains work, the brains of an extraordinary woman who looks at ife without flinching and, in spite of lismaying evidence, succeeds in establishing a standard of values in a universe without heaven or hell and vherein all men are mortal.

Murder à la Movies

NFLAMMABLE FLATFOOT: An insurance claims investigator with a low amatory threshold keeps things moving n Jay Dratler's **"The Judas Kiss"** (Holt, $3)—a Hollywood style whodunnit blending sex, alcohol, murder, and sunshine. The insurance man is an inflammable chap named Perry Farmer, dedicated to his nasty job and his cozy family, but also prone o disturbing guilt feelings. Perry's leaky personality almost becomes unstuck when he gets mixed up in a case of suspected homicide involving a Norse temptress. Hela her name is, and the mere sight of her sets our hero's blood on fire. She is "curved . . . ush . . . maybe voluptuous," he burbles.

With this trend of thought, and his wife and kid away at Lake Arrowhead, Perry is obviously the wrong man to pursue an investigation involving Hela. But pursue it he does, and far, far beyond the call of duty. When Mr. Dratler's insurance Hawkshaw is following clues "The Judas Kiss" is moderately entertaining. When he indulges in cliche tough-talk and do-it-yourself psychiatry the reader's attention wanders.

—MARTIN LEVIN.



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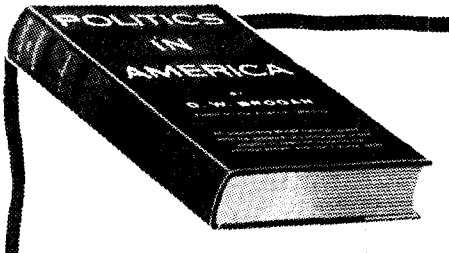

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THE PAWNS OF FEAR

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Thoreau

Continued from page 10

nouncements by a very successful citizen.

HENRY: And in what calling or profession was this optimist so highly successful?

ME: Advertising.

HENRY: Indeed. And what Gospel, what Good News, does he bring us? I can hardly imagine that he is a prophet of simplicity. Or is it some necessities of the soul that he is advertising just now?

ME: No— not exactly. Or perhaps I had better say not at all. In fact, I don't think he would agree with any of your premises or your proposals. He sees the future as bright chiefly because men in his profession have learned how to persuade people to want more and more things—even things they would never have dreamed of wanting before.

HENRY: And he thinks that will make them happier?

ME: I am afraid Henry that you do not understand the modern world. You see. . . .

HENRY: Are you so sure that it understands itself? But go on.

ME: Thank you. The truth of the matter is that in your day nobody understood the role played in a modern economy by Consumption as the underlying cause of Prosperity. As a matter of fact, in your world it did not play this role. At that time it was not yet possible to produce enough to meet the needs of your fellow citizens. Therefore, it was a virtue in the individual to use no more of anything than he needed and not to think that he needed anything he did not. But technology has changed all that. If everybody did not demand that Higher Standard of Living which advertising has taught us all to insist upon we should soon plunge into the deepest Depression our world has ever known. To supply it with only what you would call necessities would not keep one-tenth of the workers busy half the time. To use up what they are making in increasing quantities is a necessity which even the advertising man finds it difficult to persuade us to meet. The first duty of a Good Citizen in our republic is to be a Good Consumer. Sometimes we call a man who doesn't vote a bad citizen. But society can get along passably well even if a third of the people don't vote;

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but if a third of them stopped buying what you call superfluities catastrophe would be upon us. Simplify indeed! To a modern economist it is perfectly evident that unless we keep on complicating more and more exuberantly the whole of our world will come tumbling down.

HENRY: What I call Economy I understand well enough. It means the way in which men get a living, how they are fed and clothed and sheltered. But when you change Economy to Economics—another one of those modern words with a paralysis in its tail—it seems to be a very different matter. Somehow the right of men to food and clothing has got itself transformed into his duty to use up as much food and clothing as possible.

ME: That to begin with. But it is only a beginning. It is also his duty to buy hundreds of things never heard of in your day and then to buy new ones before the old have worn out. Only a society which operates on this principle can be healthy today.

HENRY: And does your very successful optimist say this in so many words? I should like very much to know what words he finds to say such things with.

ME *(extracting from my pocket a report on some of the pronouncements made in Salt Lake City last June 27 at the Fifty-first Annual Convention of the Advertising Association of the West):* Well, the most general statement was made by the director of advertising for a California public service corporation: "We of the advertising world are custodians of the indispensable key to the mass selling that must accompany production."

HENRY: The words are English but it doesn't sound like English to me. But please go on. There is nothing I ever valued more than getting new thoughts.

ME: I think a few sentences by the chairman of the board of a large New York advertising agency will make it all clearer. "Perhaps the most dynamic and unique contribution of American economy to the world is . . . that in a society which emphasizes psychological obsolescence rather than the physical wearing out of products, we have helped to achieve the most productive economy in human history."

HENRY: Give me a moment to translate that. I understand that we are going to be told what America's greatest contribution to the world really is. But I am not sure that I understand what that emphasis on "psychological obsolescence" rather

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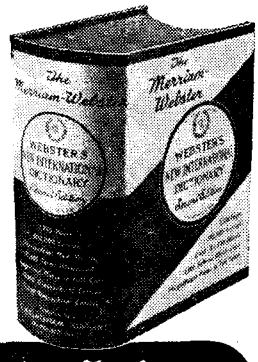

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than "physical wearing" really means. Can it really mean what I think it does? Does it really mean that our most valuable contribution to the world is our method of persuading men to throw things away while they are still just as good as they ever were? And is this "most productive economy in human history" something to boast about principally because it provides us with things to throw away and could not produce so much unless we did throw them away?

ME: Well, if you want to put it that way. It means, for instance, that the ordinary housewife must buy another vacuum cleaner just to keep the production of vacuum cleaners at a high level. It also means that the better class of citizen must buy a new automobile every year because the changed chromium ornaments make it obvious that last year's model is "psychologically obsolescent."

HENRY: And you say that all this wasting is necessary to our prosperity? I should think it would keep everybody's nose to the grindstone a good deal more constantly than is necessary.

ME: But when you work hard to buy things you don't need and thereby keep other people working hard to make them we don't call that "keeping noses to the grindstone." We call it "maintaining employment at a high level." Let me go on. As the gentleman I have just been quoting goes on to say, advertising has been "a constructive and facilitative force. . . . By creating a psychological desire to own—as opposed to that of necessity—advertising has increased the number of jobs available; raised the standard of living by reducing selling costs; increased company profits as well as company security." By way of a gloss the editor of this report adds: "Of some 500 classified psychological wants only ninety-six are necessary. . . . New markets—newly-weds, the bumper crop of babies, etc.—are constantly developing. To tap these markets desires must be created. And advertising is the means." As you see, an annual bumper crop of babies is necessary because every newborn child is potentially a consumer—of what goods—what future God only knows.

HENRY: And this gentleman is convinced that desires ought to be created and that "the psychological desire to own" should be fostered. Mankind is not yet sufficiently devoted to material things! Upon such treasures it should be encouraged to set more irrevocably its heart. But tell me something else. When I was young and inexperienced I was tempted for a foolish moment to take some stock in the prophecies of a German immigrant named Etzler who dreamed of a machine-made Utopia in which all necessary work would be done by steam-engines and men would have unlimited leisure to cultivate their souls. Now, if I understand your modern optimist aright, he wants to increase "the psychological desire to own" so that everyone will be so busy satisfying these artificially-created wants that he will not need to bother at all with his soul. Has Etzler no disciples today?

ME: A few. You remember that Mr. Shaw you once told me you met just after he erupted into heaven? You two did not hit it off too well together, but he imparted to you his vision of tomorrow's world: "The only hope for any kind of artist is a society so thoroughly organized and regimented that he can always earn a living by three hours of brainless, robot labor like machine-tending and then have twice that long left over to write his books and paint his pictures."

HENRY: I see. And even now three hours of labor would be enough to "earn a living," though it is not enough to satisfy all the "psychological desire to own" that has been created, not enough if everybody insists upon throwing things away not when they have been used up but as soon as they become "psychologically obsolescent." Does not anyone rebel against the trick that has been played upon them?

ME: A few individuals rebel. But I am not sure I admire them. They may be artists or thinkers or what-not.

FRASER YOUNG'S LITERARY CRYPT NO. 606

A cryptogram is writing in cipher. Every letter is part of a code that remains constant throughout the puzzle. Answer No. 606 will be found in the next issue.

YNPAPMMPO GQP LYM

NGBP XKMCYEM

UQPGWKLZ PZZO.

—QYUPOFKPQQP.

Answer to Literary Crypt No. 605

When liberty becomes license, dictatorship is near.—W. Durant.

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But they are not good citizens. They are not Efficient Consumers. And in this age the efficient consumer is what we need most. We already make more of everything than we can really use up. Getting rid of the stuff is our problem.

HENRY: I see. I do indeed.

ME: And what, may I ask, do you intend to do about it?

HENRY: I don't need to do anything about it. Where I now dwell there is no obsolescence, either physical or psychological. And the psychological desire to own seems to have been left somewhere behind by all those I have had occasion to talk with. But I know what I would do if I were alive in your world.

ME: Which is?

HENRY: I refused to live in the bustling nineteenth century. I said that I would stand, or sit, quietly while it passed by. I would refuse even more firmly to live in the still more bustling twentieth.

ME: You would not mind being called a bad citizen? You would refuse to contribute to Progress?

HENRY: I refused in my own day, and I was called a bad citizen for doing so. "Skulker" was, I think, the word Mr. Stevenson, the romancer and essayist, chose. But according to you I am a classic now.

ME: Would not a rebel be better advised if he worked instead for that better world in which leisure rather than a superfluity of goods had become the consequence of mechanization?

HENRY: I once knew a would-be poet who proposed to get rich so that he could devote his time to poetry. He should have gone up to the garret immediately.

ME: Really Henry, you dodge the question. Why, if everybody . . .

HENRY: They won't.

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MANY A GOOD CRUSADE

Years afterward, when I began to drive a car, I had exactly the same sensation. When, in Mr. Ford's Tin Lizzie, I pulled or pushed or stamped on something, I had no idea what the result would be. It feels just like that when you begin being a Dean.

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(Continued from page 33)

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KINGSLEY DOUBLE-CROSTIC NO. 1088

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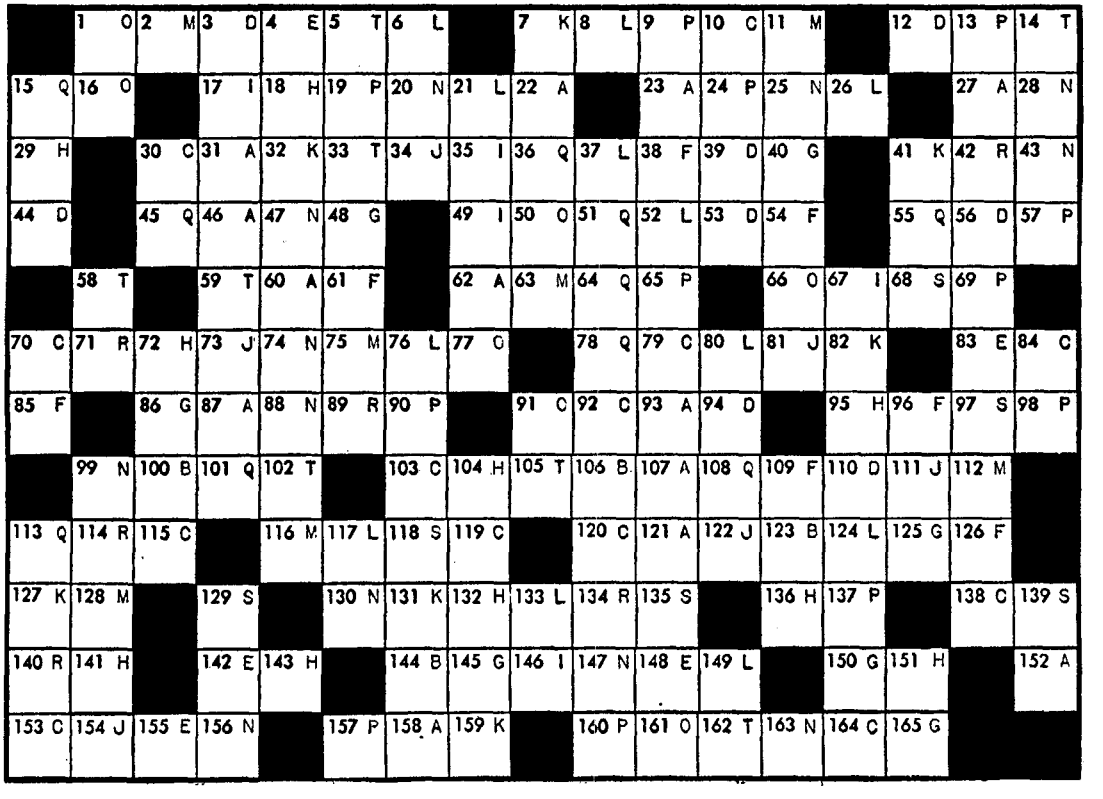
By Doris Nash Wortman

DEFINITIONS	WORDS
A. Four words preceding "Three to make ready."	152 158 121 87 60 31 22 46 93 107 27 / 62 23
B. Independent country of the Middle East whose capital is Masqat.	144 106 123 100
C. Famous two-word forecast by John Bright as to how the Northern states would win the Civil War.	138 164 119 115 10 70 103 92 120 79 84 / 30 153
D. In horse-breaking, to bend his neck so as to fasten his halter to his tail.	44 56 3 110 53 94 12 39
E. Colloquially, any plausible excuse.	142 148 155 83 4
F. Name given to German writer Richter (2 wds.; 1763-1825).	85 38 126 96 54 109 61
G. Public officer, now widely replaced by the Medical Examiner.	125 86 145 150 48 165 40
H. Pedantic schoolmaster, Rabelais and Shakespeare.	104 18 95 136 151 141 132 143 72 29
I. Modern name for the Biblical Joppa.	49 146 35 17 67
J. Pay to repossess one's own.	73 154 34 111 81 122
K. Club of U. S. and Canadian businessmen, organized at Detroit, 1915.	41 127 7 32 159 131 82

DEFINITIONS	WORDS
L. Compulsive interference by one state in the affairs of another.	52 6 37 149 133 80 21 124 26 117 8 / 76
M. Written by a bank on the back of a bouncing check (often abbreviated; 2 wds.).	128 75 116 2 63 11 112
N. Pertaining to certain attractive properties in the spinning electron of the atom.	20 74 156 99 130 25 163 43 47 88 28 / 147
O. Knight who fought with the lance in a medieval tournament.	1 161 50 66 91 77 16
P. In strict confidence (3 wds.; origin in mythology).	9 90 69 13 137 160 24 65 19 157 57 / 98
Q. Amer. Army officer, author of one of the great books of all time, 1880 (full name).	51 108 45 55 36 101 78 113 64 15
R. Ask divine support of a project in advance.	42 114 71 134 140 89
S. Persian lyric poet of 12th cent. ("The Tears of Khorassan").	139 118 97 129 135 68
T. Certain variety of leguminous vegetable, highly nutritious (2 wds.).	162 5 14 102 59 105 58 33

DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle you must guess twenty-odd WORDS, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. Alongside each definition, there is a row of dashes—one for each letter in the required word. When you have guessed a word, write it on the dashes, and also write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square of the puzzle diagram. . . When the squares are all filled in, you will find that you have completed a quotation from some published work. If read up and down, the letters in the diagram have no meaning. . . Black squares indicate ends of words; if there is no black square at the right side of the diagram, the word carries over to the next line. . . When all the WORDS are filled in, their initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Of great help to the solver are this acrostic feature and the relative shapes of words in the diagram as they develop. Authority for spellings and definitions is Webster's New International Dictionary, Second Edition.



Solution of last week's Double-Crostic will be found on page 33 of this issue.

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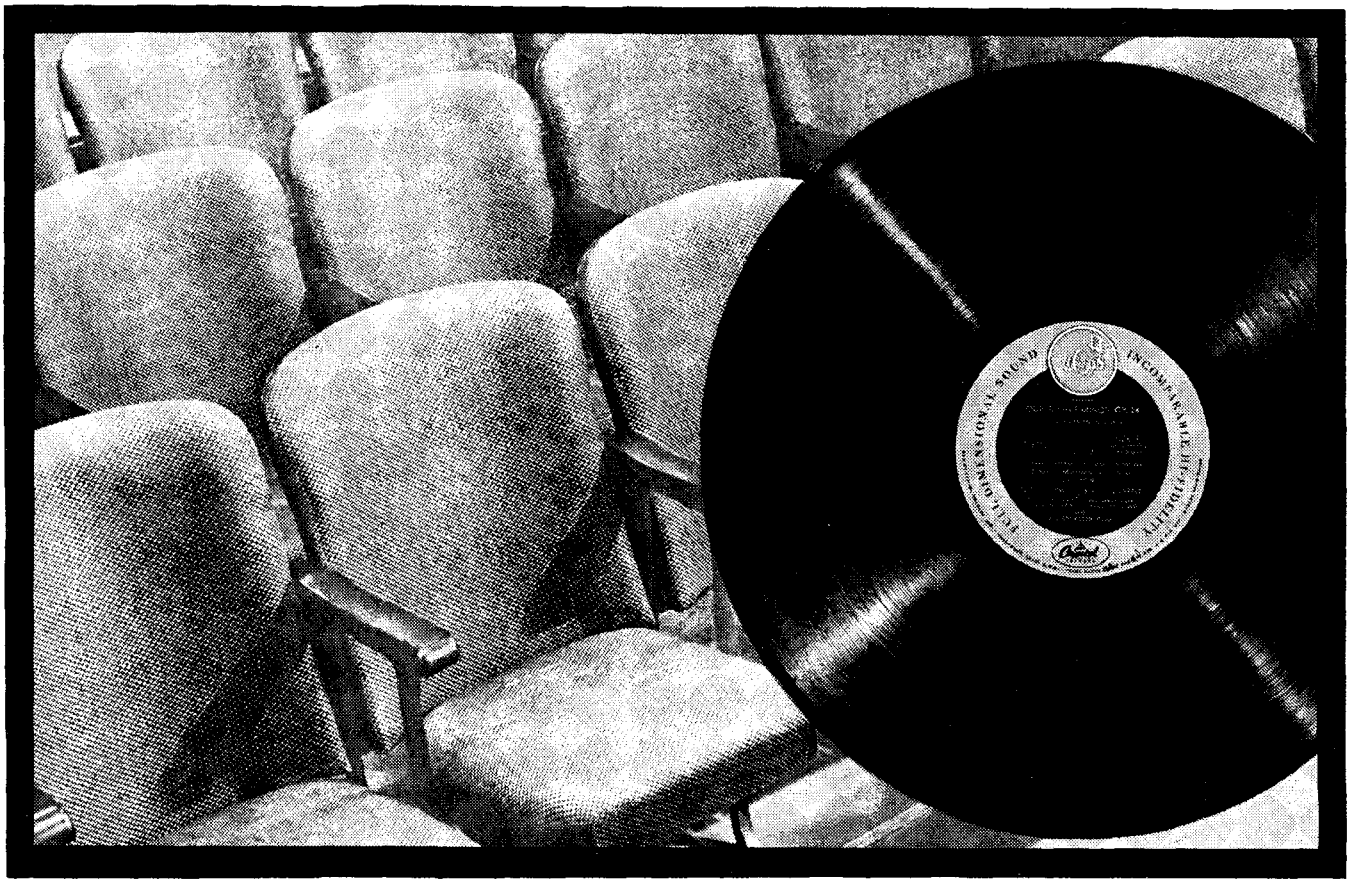

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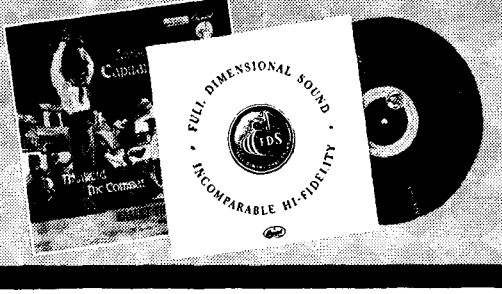

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FROM "AMELIA" TO "THE SAINT"

By IRVING KOLODIN

AS DATES go, April 1, 1955, is close enough to be dimly visible on the horizon; as composers go, Gian-Carlo Menotti, at forty-three, is still rated relatively youthful. But when that particular April date arrives his "Amelia Goes to the Ball" will celebrate its eighteenth birthday, thus giving a kind of legally mature status to Menotti's first-born while his youngest, "The Saint of Bleecker Street," is enjoying lusty infanthood at New York's Broadway Theatre.

The parallel is invited by the appearance (Angel 35140, $5.95) of a La Scala recording of "Amelia al Ballo," which title proclaims the use of the Italian text set by Menotti. Save for an occasional City Center offering, "Amelia" (whose selection as the name of Menotti's heroine, I have always suspected, had some deep-rooted relationship to another Amelia who went to a ball, in Verdi's "Ballo in Maschera") has not been easy to evaluate in performance since the first bubbly froth was churned up by Fritz Reiner and a cast of talented Curtis Institute people on the April date noted above. Its success in Philadelphia and then in New York resulted in a half-dozen Metropolitan Opera hearings in the next two seasons.

These, of course, were all in English. The reversion to the "original" in this La Scala performance sung by Margherita Carosio (Amelia), Rolando Panerai (the husband), and Giacinto Prandelli (the lover) comes to our ears as an unfamiliar but more harmonious blend of tone and text than the English. Allowing for some slight abridgment which, as the composer notes, tends to make the development of the comedy even swifter than he intended, the work is complete on a single double-sided LP. It is sung with practised ease, read with light and skimming dispatch by Nino Sanzogno. After all, these performers have this vocabulary bred in them as much as Menotti does. In total effect—to get the inevitable over with as soon as possible—"Amelia" might be an early example of late Puccini.

The comedic derivations of Menotti would seem to be such a work as Puccini's "Gianni Schicchi" (I don't know "La Rondine," hence the slight equivocation). The kind of fragmentary thematic matter passed around the orchestra there and occasionally erupting through the voices of the numerous Florentines involved buzzes in the ear through "Amelia." One notes, too, an occasional aspiration to the kind of succinct arietta (for want of a better name) known to the Puccini fancier as "O mio babbino cara." Even in this early work of Menotti, the orchestral writing is more than merely conscientious, with the dry-point technique of Wolf-Ferrari added to the more general colors of Puccini.

Menotti was far from inactive until 1946, when he burst on the general theatregoer's attention with "The Medium," teamed thereafter on Broadway with the lively skit called "The Telephone." In 1939 he wrote, on commission from NBC, the one-act "Old Maid and the Thief," followed in 1942 by the more aspiring "Island God" for the Metropolitan. The latter was an *opera seria,* rather than one in his previous *buffo* manner, and it palled more than it pleased. More recently several orchestral interludes from it have made an effect in the concert hall lacking in the theatre. In this, it shared a common fate with incidental music from Schubert's "Rosamunde" to Debussy's "Pelleas" and Britten's "Peter Grimes" . . . unsung, hence unheard.

Where the "Island God" fits into the Menottian development I couldn't say, as opportunities for revaluation of it have been lacking. "The Medium," however, is another matter. It lingers vividly in the memory from the original performance at Brander Matthews Hall on the Columbia campus through the later ones downtown and at the City Center, not to mention the recordings (Columbia SL-154, $9.96) and Mercury (MGL-7, $7.96), the first based on the stage production, the second on the movie.

Together the impressions conveyed are of a work with richly varied strands of dramatic purpose and musical color, with that "theatre" look which has become another instrument in Menotti's total orchestra of effect. The mute who limps (they are separate characters in "The Saint"), the offstage voices, the unexpected light piercing gloom, the stifled scream in

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the dark—these add up to the affection for Grand Guignol effects decidedly Menottian.

WHAT was surprising about "The Medium," however, when it was finally heard from records without the visual addenda, was the power and continuity, the self-sufficiency and expressiveness of the music. Rehearing another of the Puccini triptych some time later, it struck me that this grisly accent in Menotti, the sudden stabs of dramatic effect, were more directly derived from "Il Tabarro" than from any other single source. That, it may be recalled, is a bizarre little number concerned with life on a barge on the Seine, with the young wife of an aging barge captain and her rendezvous with a lover. Lover keeps rendezvous, captain strangles lover, as "Il Tabarro"—his cloak—covers the evidence. I state for what it is worth that the killing baritone in "Tabarro" is named Michele, even as the killing tenor in "The Saint" is named Michele.

The two currents of Puccinian influence were beginning to be influenced by something not merely pleasantly derivative. Menotti's increasingly fluid command of the English language, his ability to build musical textures on such sounds as "Monica, Monica," his capacity for finding, in English, a counterpart for the flowing syllables of Italian, gave him access to a new kind of musical patois not even available to England's most articulate contemporary, Benjamin Britten.

Came then "The Consul" (1950; DX-101, $11.70), "Amahl and the Night Visitors" (1952; RCA LM-1701, $3.98), followed in 1954 by "The Saint of Bleecker Street." I state them this way not to minimize the impact of each, but to project them in a sequence as they might appear in a bird's-eye view of his output. "The Consul," with its sharply journalistic focus, its relation to the here and now, gave further play to those impulses of Menotti which are essentially theatrical, with the "shock" impact of a stone thrown through a window, a shadow on a wall, a telephone which rings without being answered played for all they are worth with or without music. At the same time he was clearly developing his command of musical rhetoric, whether it was embodied in the purposefully banal opening, the lullaby sung by the grandmother, the emotional outcry "To This Men Have Come," or other isolated factors.

While "The Saint" was being brooded over (as I recall the sequence from a conversation with the composer) "Amahl" came into being in 1952. This comprised a new consummation of the Menottian musical impulses, with a frame of vocal values based on the thin sound of a boy soprano, a smallish orchestra, and the need to sustain an air of wonder and fantasy from first to last. This need for discipline might have been just what was most advantageous to Menotti's development at that time. Whatever the limitations imposed by the "commercial" medium of TV, they were, in sum, a refining, abrasive influence on his artistic inclinations.

Taken all together, those capacities strike me as functioning in closer coordination in "The Saint of Bleecker Street" than in any previous work. Some commentary from the dramatic side has suggested that, whatever Menotti's musical accomplishment, the literary value of the text is undistinguished. Who, it might be asked, quotes Wagner's "Tristan" text in English II at Radcliffe? If the verbal skeleton of a musical work is intelligible, reasonably compact, and above all singable, its function has been fulfilled. (All the arts of Auden did not make his "Rake" a good libretto.)

Here, as in "The Medium" and "The Consul," Menotti has elected to deal in a specific kind of emotional conflict for pertinent dramatic ends. (Or if "elected" seems too arbitrary a word, substitute "been impelled.") Rebellion and conformity are susceptible to many variations, of which "The Saint" presents one, in the "Little Italy" setting remarkably suitable for musical elaboration. As a sound musical dramatist, Menotti is keenly aware that nothing engages an audience's attention as strongly as such counter-pulls as piety, sensual love, violence, and conviviality. All of these are incorporated in "The Saint"—plus a tense brother-sister relationship, guilt, a hunted fugitive, etc.—with a believability rare in the musical theatre of our time.

Speaking merely of technique, "The Saint" represents a substantial advance on any previous accomplishment of Menotti. A large orchestra is not merely employed but utilized. From the first modal opening (setting the stage for the Bleecker Street flat in which the girl has her visions) on, the coloristic instrumental detail is richer than the composer has previously achieved. The thematic fragments are sharper in contour, more recognizable in purpose. In addition, the vocal utterances—for the pious sister, the agnostic brother, the fleshy sweetheart—are strongly individual, and consecutively so.

The musical elements are cunningly planned to form a continuous texture, in which the "arias" or "ariettas" have a lateral, rather than a vertical, relationship with the drama. That is, they almost always add something to the advance of the story, rather than being arbitrary episodes on behalf of a vocalist. As anyone conversant with operatic ambitions is aware, the conflict is a long and tiresome one between composers and librettists. Menotti seems to be balancing the scales more evenly with each new work.

Likewise, the vocal-orchestral equation is more even in "The Saint" than in previous efforts. Something of the Strauss-Debussy-Wagner technique of underscoring has been added to the generous melodic impulses of Puccini in which the voice has a preferential status. In planning his work Menotti has gathered his emotional forces for a powerful climax to Act II in Michele's rebellious outburst against his neighbors. Scene I of Act III seems to me poorly realized if at all well-planned—it is a meeting between the brother, after he has killed his girl friend, and his sister on a subway platform, in which she announces her unswerving intention to become a nun—but the rising line of musical effect, at least, is powerfully preserved by the final ritual, with its choral richness. Menotti has solved his climax problem better than he did in "The Consul," though not yet completely.

THESE details and some loose ends in the projection of the brother's character—which leave unexplained just why he is so at war with his environment, despite the eloquent aria of Act II which gives it lyric but not logical expression—cause one to wonder whether Menotti's musical impulse has not now outstripped his dramatic one, whether it is, in short, time for him to find a literary collaborator on a par with his compositional craft. If there were a Boïto available to aid him—that is to say, a composer with the skill to write a "Mefistofele" on his own, as well as a librettist able to provide Verdi with the texts for "Falstaff" and "Otello"—by all means. But there is none such.

Comparing the development of Menotti's verbal craft in "Amelia" to the vastly longer span of "The Saint," and the manner in which it has kept pace—generally speaking—with his musical evolution, I'd say he should be entitled to another grant of trial and error. Art knows few subtler relationships than that between composer and librettist. Where a degree of aptitude exists—and Menotti certainly has that—it might be better for him to wrestle with the limitations of his own skill, rather than being hampered by the arts of another.

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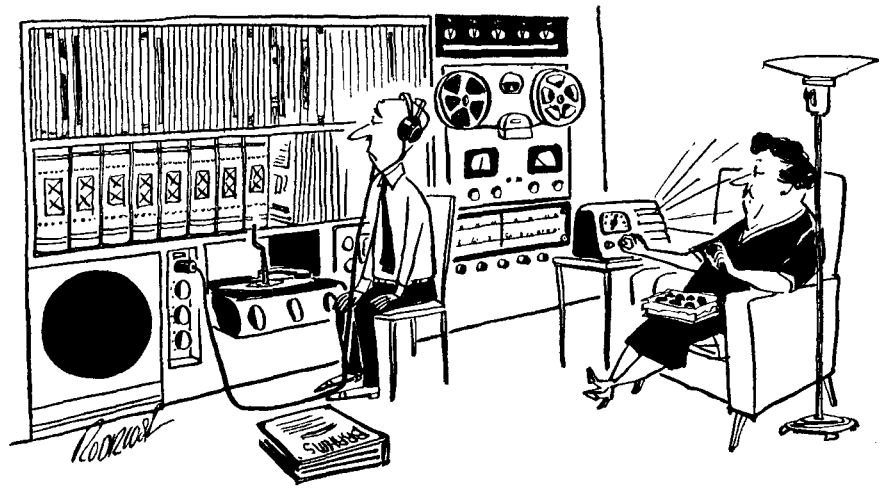

Live with Hi-Fi and Like It

By BARBARA R. DIAMOND

HIGH-FIDELITY is not merely an electronic device; it is a way of life. It has all the earmarks of a religious cult.

I am a member of the Faith, not by choice but by marriage. Not a full-fledged member, but a provisional member. I may, I *must,* enter the temple of worship and pay homage. I must participate in its activities and add to its growth. I must rejoice in its advances and triumphs. I must mourn its setbacks. And all this with my hands tied behind my back, for above all, I must not touch. I must abide by the rules, accept all the canons and dogmas—and there is no excommunication.

There must be tens of thousands of women who find themselves in the same position as I do, and perhaps they can benefit by my experience. They will perhaps, find peace and quiet from within, since peace and quiet from without are virtually, literally, absolutely . . . impossible!

If you are such a woman, impress upon yourself that you cannot beat the hi-fi cult, you can only cope with it mildly, and at best learn to live with it. I am warning you, if you enter into the spirit of the thing with the "take-an-interest-in-your-husband's-interests" attitude such as the Dorothy Dix set advises, you are a goner. You will be inextricably immersed. If this has already happened, stop reading . . . you are what is commonly known as a total loss. This is for the uninitiate.

1. DO NOT TAKE AN INTEREST, but merely appear to take an interest. You do not have to learn what high-fidelity is or how it works—technically, that is. You will form your own definition in short order that will go something like this: "High-fidelity is a mass of wires, little steel boxes, speakers, big steel boxes, tubes, and gadgets which altogether resemble the inner sanctum of one of Buck Rogers's enemies (or Captain Video's, if you've heard of television), or perhaps the execution room at Sing Sing. It is very specially designed to put snags in your stockings and gray in your hair. In addition, it makes a hell of a lot of noise." Don't bother memorizing the above definition, you'll find yourself repeating it automatically, loud and often. Once in a while you might get an answer, short and simple: "I don't like your *tone.*"

At any rate, you can pick up the terminology *He* uses without any effort at all and without knowing what it means. Here are some key words you can toss out, and you will have a happy home . . . at times. Amplifier, pre-amplifier, diamond stylus, turntable, bass reflex are approximately kindergarten level. You then proceed to: heavydrive shaft, triple-speed switch, balance-mounted tone arm, magnetic pick-up, four-pole motor, tone-arm resonance, etc. Forget such worn-out phrases as "I love you." Just ask him if he ever thinks your home will have a Binaural System. The foregoing phrase means more than you can imagine, it means you are willing to sacrifice all, which brings us to the next point in our sad narrative.

2. BE WILLING TO SACRIFICE ALL. No sense complaining, be willing. I kept a tally, and one whimper is equal to three feet of wire. Loud screams do no good. I cut it out the day it reminded my husband that he had to get a sound meter. At any rate,

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adjust your budget, what is left of it, and send for the Government booklet on the miracle of soybeans. You may never really get to like their taste, but they are remarkably warm and waterproof although, unfortunately, not soundproof.

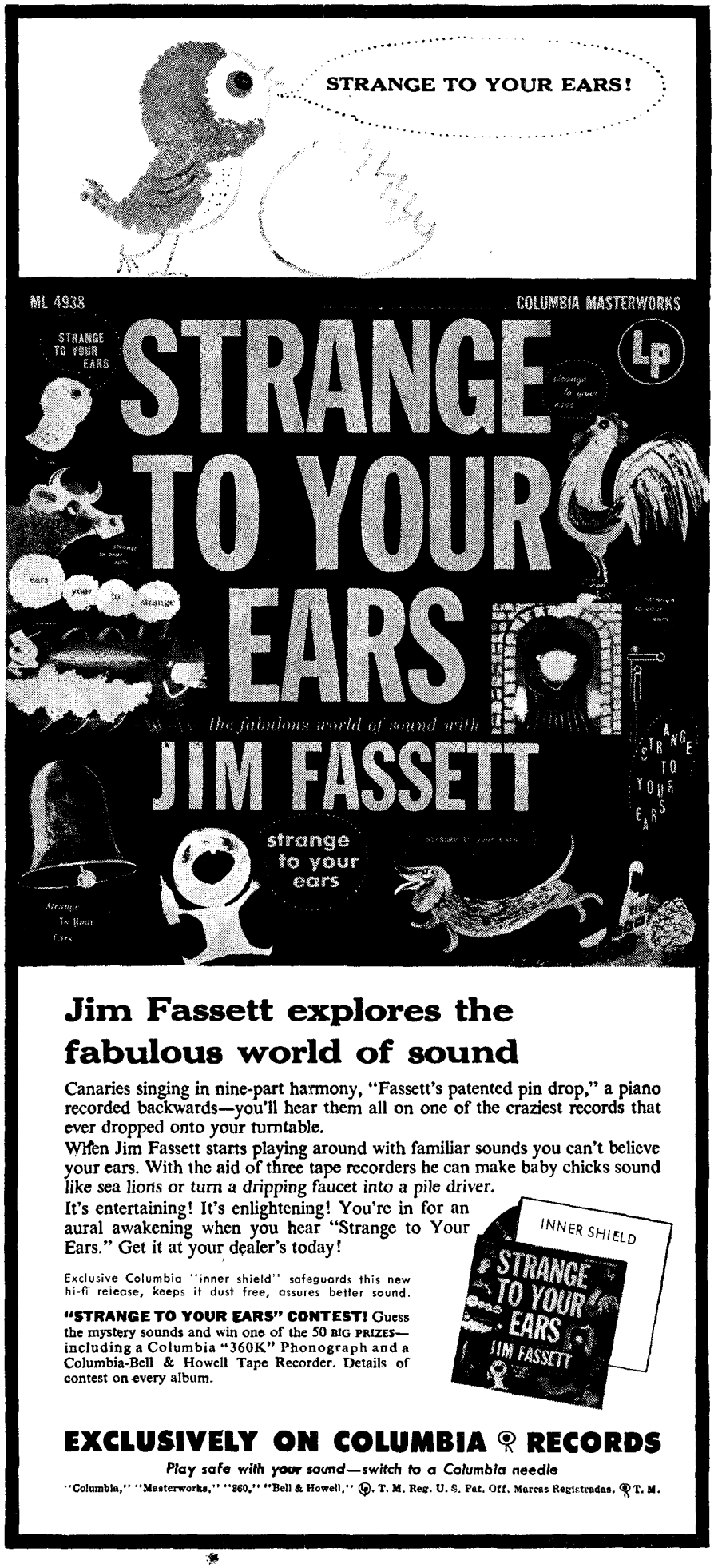
3. ADJUST YOUR HOUSEKEEPING. Hi-fi has some merit as far as cleaning is concerned. Reduces it to a minimum. Do not move a single thing in your house for a wire placed one inch out of line can break up your home. Any strange looking boxes found in the cellar, kitchen, living room, bath room, linen closet, etc. must not be touched. If in doubt, these objects are generally identified by attached wires, protruding tubes, and levers, or possibly a flashing light will warn you of its nature. Even if it has four legs, two ears, a long tail—acts like a rat, smells like a rat, looks like a rat—hands off. You never know what the latest equipment is, and if your husband is worth a damn as a hi-fier he has at least part of all new equipment.

4. ALTER YOUR MUSICAL TASTE. Most people have some musical taste (if you have none, so much the better). If your taste runs to popular material such as dance tunes and ballads, forget them. If your taste runs to classics, forget that as you knew it. The latter are no good and crawl with unchallenging sounds. And SOUND is the thing, after all. Start with Bartok quartets. They may send you running from the room but they are nothing compared to the thirteenth-century obscure Italians who wrote music which produced sounds that are indescribable. The violins play high C, the basses play low G, and somewhere in the middle a cello attempts to play both simultaneously. It is the musical counterpart of that form of medieval torture known as the rack.

Only recently the miracle of long-playing records, which made their big splash several years ago, has shown itself as the work of the devil. Since they take up little space that has been a strong selling point. But did you ever realize that the reduction in the area covered by a record collection was just a preliminary means of clearing your living quarters for the high-fidelity equipment?

Well, realize it!

And, while you are engaged in the above recognition, pardon me while I sneak off to my sanctuary. I crank up the machine, take a shellacked record with a big scratch across the surface, slam down the arm (equipped with a steel needle), and listen with deep content and nostalgia to the scratch, crackle, and squeak.



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Gieseking on Mozart

By ABRAM CHASINS

MOZART'S creativeness touched virtually every species of music, and left none without some supreme examples of his art. Yet, in the sum of a productive life, there is usually one thing above all others which has been most clearly seen, most deeply felt. What was the thing for Mozart? Confronted with the genius who embraced all musical media, one hesitates. The operas? The symphonies? Concertos? Chamber music?

If the Desert Island game were played by a reasonably informed group, it would most likely yield a majority vote for the operas, with a fair chance that each of the other categories would enlist its own enthusiasts.

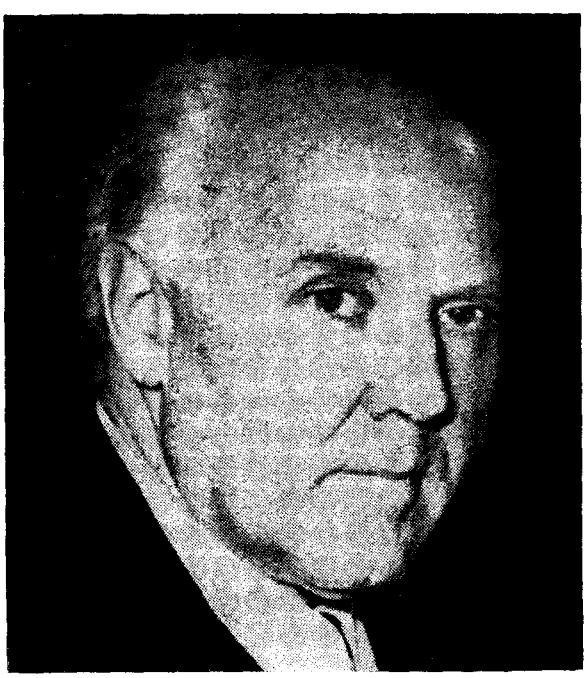
Of one thing we can be certain; few would choose the works for piano solo. If the game were continued to a consideration of only the piano solos, it would most probably disclose little variety in the specific choice of some dozen works out of the sixty-three as truly representative of the Mozart magic. These, naturally, are the most played and best-known compositions, for masterpieces are the public's business. All else are professional matters.

From a musicological viewpoint alone there is high merit and justification in Angel Records' Limited Edition of Mozart's complete works for solo piano, recorded by Walter Gieseking (Angel 35-11K, $75). Tributes are indeed in order to those responsible for the luxuriously beautiful case, individually engraved jackets for the eleven discs, and exquisitely printed and illustrated booklet. Such meticulous and rare craftsmanship is a delight to the eye.

The music's the thing, however, and so I went on to find what rewards awaited the ear. One starts with an understanding that Mozart's masterpieces of piano writing are principally confided to his concertos and chamber music with both string and wind instruments. The exceptions are here represented by the Fantasy, K.475; the B minor Adagio; A minor Rondo, K.511; C minor Fantasy, K.396; Little Gigue, K.574; the Mannheim sonatas, K.309 and 311; the A minor, K.310; B flat, K.333, C minor K.457, and the public's favorite in A, K.331, with its famed theme-and-variations opening and "Turkish March" finale.

The larger part of the album has educational rather than esthetic interest, for it consists of improvisations by the child prodigy which were later notated, other interesting but innocent compositions such as the sonata, K.545, inscribed by Mozart as "little clavier sonata for beginners," and some pot-boilers with which Mozart paid off publishing debts. Most of these works, to put it frankly, were written with three of Mozart's fingers while the rest of him was occupied with inspirations of overwhelming power and perfection. So much for the music.

In the sum of Gieseking's pianistic life, what has been the thing for him? Impressionism. He alone has ruled that domain with an incomparable mastery. One hoped that the matchless knowledge, interpretative subtlety, and emotional inspiration which he lavished upon the music of Debussy and Ravel would now be bestowed upon Mozart. One expected that the same artistic responsibility would be directed in the same measure of devotion to the woefully and widely misunderstood genius of geniuses. Approaching as we are the two-century mark of Mozart's birth, it is indeed high time for a definitive recording of the consummate composer-pianist's keyboard solo works.



"Impressionism is the thing for Gieseking."

One is therefore doubly pained and reluctant to find that Gieseking, apart from a few exceptional moments, has lent his great gifts and his great prestige to further the fictional nineteenth-century tradition of Mozart as a miniaturist. Someone once made the illuminating comment, "People will not believe that Mozart can be so powerful because he is so beautiful." It is even harder to believe that in the hands of a Gieseking Mozart could emerge devoid of both power *and* beauty.

I listened to record after record, baffled and confounded that such an artist, like so many lesser colleagues, could have been so misled. Where in these performances is the Gieseking vitality, variety of touch, and singing tone? No one expected even him to convert the hackworks into great works, and it is perhaps too much to ask an interpreter to bring a spirit of sanctification to weak themes and routine structures. Nevertheless, there is no finer test of an artist's sympathy and skill than the ability to bring luminosity to pale material, to discover, intensify, and to extend meanings. And no artist has met this test more convincingly than Gieseking. But not here.

The miniature frame persists, even through the powerfully inspired works of Mozart at his most Beethovenish, as in the fantasy, K.475. The playing here is as angular and static as it is wonderfully rounded and forward-moving in Gieseking's Debussy and Ravel. The notes themselves are all there, clear and dry, but they take us nowhere except right back to the mute symbols on the page. Metrical quantities are also all there, but the rhythm lacks tension in big moments and flexibility in simple song. The suppression of Mozart's intensity, color, brilliance, and wit perpetuates an all-too-common stylistic error which the most superficial curiosity would destroy instantly. Even a casual observation of available manuscripts, tables of ornaments, and letters by Mozart and his contemporaries would help an artist to render an overdue service to authenticity.

In one letter alone, Mozart enlightens us by reporting to his father a performance of one of his symphonies: "It went

(*Continued on page* 47)

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Three-Penny Symphonies

By FRED GRUNFELD

AS RECORD prices tumble, industry magnates foresee LPs on every turntable and an infinite baffle in every garage. Already the high cost of listening has dropped so low that a six-disc package containing all six Tchaikovsky symphonies, complete and unabridged, costs only $10.98. That's not much more than one symphony used to cost in days when albums were not only more expensive but also heavier to carry.

The symphony set is the first such venture on the Camden label, RCA Victor's youngest and most bargain-minded offspring. Camden is essentially a reprint operation. Deleted Red Seal issues are reconditioned for their growing catalogue; the Tchaikovsky recordings, considered top-drawer in years gone by, were still active 78 contenders in 1948. In most cases the conductors and orchestras have made more recent recordings, all agleam with fidelity, which bring much stiffer (though not firmer) prices.

One would never guess this from looking at the labels. What euphemisms have we here? The "Cromwell" Symphony Orchestra; the "Warwick" Symphony; the "Sussex"? Only the nomenclature of Viennese pick-up groups is more bewildering. And while the orchestras have been renamed like so many 7th Avenue hotels, the conductors aren't identified at all. Presumably this expedient protects all concerned from loss of standard-price prestige and sales appeal.

Actually these disguises can be penetrated without much trouble by anyone owning an old catalogue. The truth will out anyway: a bit of digging reveals that the "Sussex," playing Tchaikovsky's First, is in reality the Indianapolis Symphony, under Fabien Sevitzky; the "Cromwell," in the "Little Russian" is the Cincinnati Symphony, led by Eugene Goosens; the so-called "Globe," performing the "Polish," is in fact Hans Kindler's National Symphony; and the "Centennial," playing the Fourth, is better known as the Boston Symphony (which won't have a centennial until 1981), and led by Serge Koussevitsky.

It might be more exciting to play this game *á bouche fermée*, as the singers say: the Fifth and Sixth are conducted by the same man, celebrated for white hair, genial features, and tonal extravagances. He is a champion of modern music and has appeared in a Disney film. His initials are L. S. In the Fifth he conducts an orchestra called the "Warwick." That also happens to be the name of a prominent hotel in a place referred to often as the City of Brotherly Love. In the "Pathétique" he leads an orchestra dubbed the "Star." Normally it plays in an amphitheatre at a certain West Coast location famous for its film- and star-making activities. But no more—these hints will have to suffice.

THEY make a motley collection, yet the total effect is rather more varied and refreshing than if a single conductor's viewpoint had prevailed for all six. Sevitzky's is a straightforward, square-cut reading; Goosens's is remarkably loose-jointed and relaxed; Kindler's remains slow-footed and pedantic; Koussevitzky's strives for intense dramatic climaxes; and conductor S. achieves a splendid rhetoric—

(*Continued on page* 49)

Photo: Baron, London

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Maria Meneghini Callas is back at La Scala and her Chicago Opera season is now musical history. Claudia Cassidy of the *Chicago Tribune* said she had the public "bewitched". *Newsweek* wrote that "*she is almost a legend in her own lifetime.*" *Time* reported that she "*electrified the crowd*" and "*recalled Chicago's greatest operatic days with Mary Garden and Galli-Curci.*" Irving Sablosky, *Chicago Daily News* stated that "*it is beside the point to say she is a soprano.* [illegible]."

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Recordings in Review

Nielsen for Flute and Clarinet

NIELSEN: *Concerto for Flute. Gilbert Jespersen, with the Danish State Radio Symphony Orchestra conducted by Thomas Jensen. Concerto for Clarinet. Ib Erikson, the same, conducted by Mogens Wöldike.* (London LL-1124, $3.98.)

UNTIL the concert-hall repertory in this part of the world catches up with the writings of the Danish Carl Nielsen, it seems rather pointless to talk of the musical "progress" instituted by Bela Bartok, Bohuslav Martinu, or other more recent composers in a generally traditional idiom. The clarinet concerto issued here last spring by Columbia (ML-2219) in a performance by Louis Cahuzac provided one kind of eyeopener; this work for flute provides another. The inference is, then, that both eyes of the musically aware should now be open to the qualities of Nielsen.

The cardinal thing about this flute concerto is that it has no kinship with anything imagined previously as appropriate for that dulcet instrument. In fact, I venture the opinion that the orchestral concept would be arresting were there no solo instrument at all. It is, in other words, a remarkably eloquent piece of music in which the flute is one element of color rather than an all-absorbing focus of attention. The named virtuoso, Jespersen, plays it with many subtle inflections and complete technical command. Very fine sound.

His disc partner Erikson does not have quite the same astringent but powerful personality on the clarinet as Cahuezac, but in the context of this dual enterprise it is a performance which illuminates another aspect of Nielsen's musical personality and should thus result (one hopes) in a wider appreciation of the gifts of this remarkable man who died as long ago as October 21, 1931, but who is just beginning to be appreciated outside of his native Denmark.

"Classics" by Camden

BERNSTEIN: *"Jeremiah" Symphony, "On the Town" (Ballet Music), and "Facsimile" (Choreographic Essay). Leonard Bernstein conducting, with Nan Merriman, mezzo-soprano.* (Camden CAL-196, $1.98.)

AT THE going rate for musical experiences at the present time, it is conceivable that more people would be inclined to pay twice the quoted price for this memento of Bernstein's early creative impulses than for his later recreative ones (on another label) as conductor of Beethoven's "Eroica" and the Brahms No. 4. If all this means is that the wary record-buyer has some reward awaiting him, finally, for his painfully acquired discrimination, let us all give thanks and hope that the Camden "reprint" project prospers (see page 43).

If the merits of these works are uneven—and, on the whole, there is the most sustained interest in the least pretentious score, namely the "On the Town" music—they are nevertheless quick with the pulse of life and magnetic to the ear for the fervor imparted to them in performance by the creator. Certainly they provide a vivid preservation of that moment in postwar musical time which was largely Leonard.

The longest work, of course, is "Jeremiah," which occupies one whole side. I have never heard a live performance of it, and thus can only speak of it from this recording and its progenitor (performed, of course, with the St. Louis, here given the *nom de disque* of "Schuyler" Symphony). I can only wish that the vocabulary employed by Bernstein in the first two sections—"Prophecy" and "Profanations"—added up to something more consecutive in musical statement, but his setting of the Hebrew text in the final "Lamentation" is alive and persuasive. Cleansed of the surface scratch and restricted range with which it was formerly afflicted, Nan Merriman's singing of the mezzo part can be heard with a full appreciation of the powerful yet focused sound, and the emotional fervor in her original effort.

Eloquence Anonymous

ROSSINI: *Sonata,* TARTINI: *Concerto in A, etc. I Musici.* (Angel 35086, $5.95.)

VIVALDI: *Concerti Grossi in D minor, A major, D major, and D minor (with* viola d'amore*). The same.* (Angel 35087, $5.95.)

IN AN area of activity embracing such admirable ensembles as the Virtuosi di Roma and the Societa Scarlatti, no superlatives are justified, save to specify I Musici ("The Musicians") as the youngest entity of all, and the one with the most promise for the future. Since these are attributes dealing with tomorrow rather than with today, they can be noted with hope, also with a certain amount of confidence based on demonstrated attainments.

Whether it is in the Rossini "Sonata" (a term not to be interpreted too literally, since it embodies a good deal of familiar Rossinian jocosity as well as some other impulses more relevant to the title) or the Tartini concerto, or the D minor Vivaldi concerto with Bruno Giuranna as the superb *viola d'amore* soloist, the conductorless I Musici deliver a maximum of musical expressiveness with a minimum of extraneous exhibition. The leadership impulse is not conveyed insistently, but it underlies all the results attained, no matter how anonymously administered.

In addition to the fine totality of sound, it is worth noting that all the instrumental soloists are first rate, whether it is Montserrat Cervera in the Vivaldi violin concerto in D, Enzo Altobelli in a Tartini cello concerto in A, or the previously-mentioned Giuranna, on the *viola d'amore*. The impulses that stir these musicians to master this unusual repertory can hardly be common ones, and the results are equally uncommon. Angel's processing gives a maximum of vibrant, expressive sound in an aural framework highly suitable to the purposes involved. The annotations, it may be added, are more abundant in poetic eloquence than they are in pertinent fact.

Fischer-Dieskau on Schubert

SCHUBERT: *"Die Schöne Müllerin." Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, baritone, with Gerald Moore, piano.* (V LHMV-6, $4.98.)

IF I knew more about gardening terminology, or had a comprehensive command of the vintner's jargon, I could, possibly, produce a suitable analogy for the reactions stirred by this enterprise. It would be something sage having to do with a promising growth transplanted before it had really sunk penetrating roots, or served from the bottle before the sediment had been thrown off and the beverage developed its full, clear, intoxicating power.

Lacking these images, I can only say that young Fischer-Dieskau is a baritone of clear potentialities and some admirable attainments who has been indulged in an undertaking beyond his present abilities. He can sing such a *sotto voce* song as "Der Neugierige" with magical effect, but he has palpable difficulties with others of more imposing dimensions, such as "Das Wandern" or "Der Jäger." As in the version of Anton Dermota noted

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here last month (London LL-971. $3.98), neither the mere desire for accomplishment nor the basically suitable voice can provide the seasoned artistry or the easy command of the complexities in these songs previously provided by a Tauber or a Hüsch, or, more recently, by a Schiøtz.

There are many beautiful details in Fischer-Dieskau's delivery of the cycle and a good many subtle touches in the pianistic participation of Moore which add to the total effect, but it is all a little green, unready, premature.

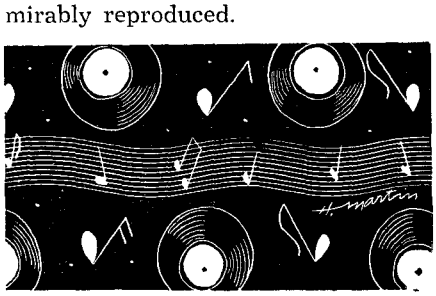
Handel by Hewitt

HANDEL: *"Water Music." The Hewitt Orchestra, conducted by Maurice Hewitt.* (Haydn Society HSL-107, $5.95.)

SOMETHING between a prejudice and a predilection has been conquered by this finely-phrased, well-sounding performance of the original twenty sections in Handel's musical extravaganza known as the "Water Music." The prejudice had to do with a highly selective choice of pieces from the whole long favored on records; the predilection had to do with the playing of them under the direction of the late Sir Hamilton Harty, who also arranged this favored suite for modern orchestra.

By the adroit choice of tempi and the explicit artistry of the players in his ensemble (especially the French virtuosi of woodwinds and brass), Hewitt has made a remarkably successive experience of the suite. The familiar bourrée, air, and hornpipe recur at welcome intervals, but in between are numerous other sections (airs, minuets, gigues, etc.) which add much that is delightfully Handelian to the whole.

The point worth emphasizing here, it seems to me, is that Hewitt, by his understanding of the idiom and his enthusiastic communication of it, has expanded the appeal of the "Water Music" for those who knew it so long as concentrated by Harty. For all, however—whether acquainted with the music in some other form or not—this disc may be noted as a compendium of fine wind-instrument playing (horn, clarinet, oboe, flute, etc.) admirably reproduced.



Verdi's Requiem in Duplicate

THE CROSS-CURRENTS of recording history may someday reveal that without Victor De Sabata's version of Verdi's Requiem (Angel 35208B) there might never have been a public release of Arturo Toscanini's broadcast version of 1951 (RCA Victor LM-6018). Whatever the impulse that prevailed upon Toscanini to endorse this admittedly flawed product, one must be grateful to it; for it puts into circulation, beside the new De Sabata and the old Serafin (RCA Victor LCT-6003), representative versions of this work by the three most prominent Italian conductors of our time.

Upon reasonably detailed evaluation it is evident that none of these is musically perfect or very close to it. Certainly the solo quartet in the Serafin version (Caniglia, Stignani, Gigli, Pinza) is measurably superior to anything the newer ones have to offer, and will be listened to for years to come on that account, regardless of other shortcomings (mechanical as well as musical). Unquestionably the Angel is the nearest thing to a flawless engineering product of the three. But the overwhelming communication of essentials remains Toscanini's power to command.

If one had Serafin's excelling quartet conducted by Toscanini under the studio conditions enjoyed by De Sabata, what a Requiem that would be! But in valuing the Requiems we do have—for instrumental design, choral weight, dramatic drive and emotional fervor—the concept of Toscanini's performance, flawed though it is in realization, must be recognized as the one unique element not likely to be duplicated or superseded.

The flaws to which I allude do not include the celebrated off-pitch sequence heard from Herva Nelli during the broadcast. A reasonably accurate replacement was found in the rehearsal tapes and dubbed in. However, there is more than a little disorderly singing by tenor Giuseppe Di Stefano, Fedora Barbieri's mezzo voice is not always on pitch, and Cesare Siepi's beautifully resonant sound is expressively pallid by comparison with the riches of Pinza.

Oddly, Di Stefano and Siepi are also the male half of the quartet in the Angel issue. Here they are more perfect in their lines, so to speak, because of the opportunities for repetition afforded by the studio conditions, but more individualistic, less purposeful than in the RCA. Of Angel's others, Orelia Dominguez, a mezzo new to me, does some beautiful work in the ensembles though she is small in sound for the "Liber scriptus," and Elizabeth Schwarzkopf provides neither the soaring ease one imagined she would command for the high-lying soprano phrases nor the melting sound to blend with the others that Nelli does in the Toscanini performance. Each of the Schwarzkopf - Dominguez - Di Stefano - Siepi quartet provides his or her personal views of the Latin text; in the Toscanini, the quartet's integrated verbal pronunciation adds continuity to the musical sounds that are heard.

The factors that are disaffecting about De Sabata's effort include such absolutes as exaggerated extremes of tempi—too slow where an andante is indicated, too fast where the indication is merely allegro; a rather coarse taste in dynamics; an inclination to make not merely dramatic, or theatrical, contrasts in effects, but melodramatic ones; a willingness to subdue the orchestra to a mere accompaniment (as in the mezzo's "Recordare") rather than molding the strings and voice indivisably. Then there are the comparatives: those elements which would be "good" were there not something better to serve as a measure of quality.

If the facts must be spelled out, some of us are doubtless spoiled for lesser efforts by the thoroughness, the knowledge, and the profoundly spiritual quality Toscanini brings to music such as this. If it is proper to honor him for making, so far as is humanly possible, every note of Beethoven's "Missa Solemnis" audible, why not expect the same of him, or other conductors in Verdi's Requiem? In the end (for a detail) it is this priceless contempt for the easily effective, the cheaply sentimental, or the appallingly superficial which makes Toscanini's "Ingemisco" a more exalted thing than De Sabata's, though the tenor in both cases is Di Stefano.

For those concerned with sound *per se* the RCA is never less than good and, in revealing the thunderous thing Toscanini makes of the "Dies Irae" in Carnegie Hall, sometimes overwhelming. Audience noises are minimal, though, paradoxically, disturbing by their absence in the occasional patches based on rehearsal material. Certainly Angel has enabled De Sabata to realize his intentions to the uttermost; but they cannot be made other than what they are.

—IRVING KOLODIN.

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Recordings Reports I: Classical LP's

WORK, PERFORMER, DATA	REPORT
Beethoven: Concerto No. 5 in E flat. Edwin Fischer, piano, with Wilhelm Furtwaengler conducting the Philharmonia Orchestra. Victor L-HMV-4, $4.98.	One of the great "Emperors" of the present assortment, with Furtwaengler in particularly powerful command of the orchestral score. Fischer's playing has almost as much breadth as that admired in the Backhaus of not many months back, but not quite as much lightness of hand in relevant places of the finale. Very good "EMI" studio sound. While decorating this issue with a copy of Van Dyck's painting of the Duke of Lennox (aristocrat, "Emperor," get it?), RCA's archivists might have come up with a better likeness of Beethoven for the brochure. In this one he looks like Edward Arnold.
Bloch: "Schelomo." Tibor de Machula, cello, with Willem Van Otterloo conducting the Hague Philharmonic. Epic LC-3072, $3.98.	De Machula, long first cellist of the Concertgebouw Orchestra, is a splendid technician, and Van Otterloo makes a considerable turmoil in Bloch's richly imagined score, but it does not strike me as an expression of the music to match Columbia's by Leonard Rose, not to mention the Feuermann of golden memory. However, his Lalo on side two is as good as any now available, and powerfully reproduced.
Bruckner: Symphony No. 3. Hans Knappertsbusch conducting the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra. London LL-1044, $3.98.	With this issue Knappertsbusch strengthens a weak link in the recorded chain of Bruckner symphonies, and also reveals himself as a thoroughly qualified interpreter of that composer. Needless to say, the broad tempi are broad, the weighty accents of suitable displacement. Big robust sound.
Dvorak: "Legends," Op. 59. Thomas Scherman conducting the Little Orchestra Society. Columbia ML-4920, $3.98.	The pleasures of these works are tastefully conveyed by Scherman, whose ability to express himself tonally has improved measurably of late, likewise his capacity for making an orchestra play cleanly, in tune and on time. For those unacquainted with them, the "Legends" have much of the melodic quality of the "Slavonic Dances," if not their peasant vigor. Very good quality, technically.
Elgar: "In the South"; Froissart Overture." Orchestra of Radio Berlin, Gerhard Pflüger conducting. Urania 7136, $3.98.	An abundance of Elgarian mannerisms dominate the attention in both works, though the distinctive ideas that make for interest in the "Enigma Variations" or the Violin Concerto are lacking. The second side offers Britten's "Soirées Musicales" which exist in better form elsewhere. Vigorous, rather rough performances, loud, not too well defined, reproduction.
Grainger: "Country Gardens," etc. Morton Gould conducting the Rochester "Pops." Columbia A1-49, $2.98.	Gould has a sympathetic sense for this repertory ("Spoon River," "Shepherd's Hey," "Mock Morris," "Molly on the Shore," as well as "Tune from County Derry") and the orchestra delivers it ably. The Stokowski versions on RCA are better sounding; however, that disc entails some non-Grainger matter possibly unwanted, in which case the Gould would be preferable.
Lalo: Symphony in G minor, "Rhapsodie Norvegienne." George Sebastian conducting the Colonne Orchestra. Urania RLP-7124, $3.98.	This French composer's conception of a symphony is somewhat at variance with more common ones (the scherzo is borrowed almost entire from an opera *scène du bal*) but it has some charming music in it, whatever the name it goes by. The "Rhapsodie" is illuminating for a whole stretch of music that seems to foreshadow Dukas's "L'Apprenti Sorcier" of twenty years later. Sebastian does his work efficiently, but the recording is hardly distinguished for fidelity.
Nielsen: Excerpts from "Maskarade." Thomas Jensen conducting the Danish State Radio Orchestra. London LD-9156, $2.98.	Rather more specialized Nielsen than the matter mentioned on page 44, involving, no doubt, some local color allusions not too meaningful to us. However, some of the dance music from the opera is attractive, and it is all well-played under Jensen's attentive leadership.
Prokofieff: Symphony No. 4 in C major; "The Prodigal Son." George Sebastian conducting the Colonne Orchestra. Urania RLP-7139, $3.98.	Though this creation of 1930 for the fiftieth anniversary of the Boston Symphony Orchestra is rarely programmed in this country today, it has, clearly, a generative place in the thinking that produced the more favored No. 5. The performances of both the symphony and the ballet are in the "utility" category, that is to say, serviceable in the absence of any others but not inherently of distinction. "French" studio recording, which means shallow strings, not much resonance.
Rachmaninoff: Symphony No. 1 in D minor. Dresden Philharmonic conducted by Heinz Bongartz. Urania RLP-7131, $3.98.	Despite Rachmaninoff's self-deprecation of this score (he would not allow its publication during his lifetime), it has many qualities of his best work. The performance is persuasive, the orchestral playing excellent, the recording quite decent.
Rossini-Respighi: "Boutique Fantasque." Robert Irving conducting the Philharmonia Orchestra. Victor LBC-1080. $2.98.	Irving does not bring the kind of sparkle to this music that Ansermet imparts (London 274), but it is deftly done and well reproduced with a second side of other material. Unfortunately, this is more of a bust than a boon, for it is filled with such *morceaux* as Mendelssohn's "Spring Song," Judex from Gounod's "Mors et Vita," and the Intermezzo from Delibes's "Naïla," with Nicolai Malko conducting in not-too-animated manner.
Scriabin: "The Divine Poem." USSR Radio Orchestra. Nikolai Golovanov conducting. Classic Editions. CE-3003, $5.95.	Provided the listener is prepared to fill in some orchestral details, mentally, that cannot be heard aurally, Golovanov's performance has the qualities of propulsion and temperament to make Scriabin's thought alive. As Russian recording goes, this is one of the better samples.
Thomson: "Three Pictures for Orchestra." The composer conducting the Philadelphia Orchestra. "Five Songs from William Blake." Mack Harrell, baritone, with Eugene Ormandy conducting. Columbia ML-4919. $4.98.	The imagery in the pictures ("The Seine at Night," "Wheat Field at Noon," "Sea Piece with Birds") does not seem to me very striking or especially pertinent to the subjects named, but there is much to hear in the Blake settings, notably in "Tiger, Tiger" and "The Little Black Boy." Harrell is an excellent interpreter (the songs were written for him), and both conductors provide sounds of fine quality from the virtuoso ensemble.
Turina: "Procession del Rocio," "Danzas Fantasticas," "Canto a Sevilla," etc. Pedro de Freitas Branco conducting the Symphony Orchestra of Madrid, with Lola Rodriguez de Aragon, soprano. Westminster WL-5320, $5.98.	Those unacquainted with the scope of Turina's gifts will find this collection absorbing in variety as well as enjoyable in sum. Freitas Branco leads with an authoritative knowledge of the literature if not with as much finesse in the "Danzas Fantasticas" as Argenta offered on a recent London disc. The beautiful "Canto a Sevilla" are expressively sung by Rodriguez, though her vocal technique is not always reliable, and some of the sounds she produces are rough. Good, but not outstanding reproduction. —IRVING KOLODIN.

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Gieseking-Mozart

Continued from page 42

magnificently! We had forty violins, ten double basses, six bassoons, and all the woodwind doubled." Mozart's own words demonstrate what to him constitutes a magnificent Mozart performance, and discloses it to be in sharp opposition to musicians who believe they serve him faithfully through reduction and repression.

The essence of the Haydn-Mozart-Beethoven styles is dramatic power. It comes as a shock to hear the strange and deeply tragic B minor Adagio emerge as a far less emotional, far less evocative work than, for example, Ravel's "Le Gibet" as only Gieseking plays it. Furthermore, Mozart's mature keyboard works were not written for either the clavichord or harpsichord. They were written for a piano: not our modern grand, of course, but one whose clanging brilliance compensated for less sonority. And it had a pedal, that soul of the instrument which no pianist uses more imaginatively than Gieseking. On behalf of Mozart, he uses it sparingly or not at all.

A fragile sonority for Mozart the dramatist is damaging enough, but a curtailed expressivity renders him lifeless. One can shrug a shoulder and smile sadly at some uncomprehending pianist who will take a visionary and passionate Mozart piece and treat it with the cool efficiency of a respectful robot. But from the Gieseking, whose flaming power in the French repertory is a lesson for all, it is impossible to accept a strait-jacketed Mozart, a Mozart without Italian color or Viennese sparkle.

These are strong words applied to an artist of Gieseking's stature. But it is precisely because of his stature that one becomes, perforce, counsel for the defense of the departed genius who made accessible to posterity adequate indication of his ideals and desires.

The particular value of this set would, then, have to do with making available an aural reference to the notes of a complete collection of Mozart works from a category heretofore unrecorded. It will be consulted by many students who should realize that there is need in our pragmatic time for the high-mindedness which this enterprise represents, regardless of Gieseking's disaffinity for Mozart's language.

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CAL 198—TWO PIANO FAVORITES. Pierre Luboshutz and Genia Nemenoff, duo-pianists. Sels. include: Ritual Fire Dance—Tambourin Chinois—Scaramouche. 8 others.

CAL 193 — BIZET: SYMPHONY IN C— SCHUMANN: CARNAVAL SUITE. Stratford Symphony Orch.

CAL 190 — SHAKESPEARE'S PLAYS. Scenes from: Macbeth — The Taming of the Shrew — Julius Caesar — Romeo and Juliet — Merchant of Venice — As You Like It. (Also on same record.) **ANTHOLOGY OF ENGLISH LYRIC VERSE.** 22 Poems. Cornelia Otis Skinner and Otis Skinner, Dramatic Readers.

CAL 197 — DVOŘÁK: SLAVONIC DANCES, Op. 46 (Complete). Carlyle Symphony Orch.

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Recordings Reports II: Miscellaneous LP's

WORK, PERFORMER, DATA	REPORT
Bach: Partita in D minor. Zino Francescatti, violin (with Partita in E). Columbia ML-4935, $3.98. Bach: Partita in D minor. Julian Olevsky, violin (with Sonata in G minor). Westminster WL-5306, $5.98.	In surefingered command of the letter of the partita these records have in common, Francescatti has somewhat the better of his younger colleague, but one is always conscious that for him it is violin music, while Olevsky conveys more the impression of believing it to be music for the violin. In the Chaconne particularly, Francescatti drives his tone hard for maximum effect, while Olevsky builds his structure to an impressive totality. No one can question the dazzling feats Francescatti manages in the E major partita, though some of the musical detail is wilful. Olevsky's playing of the G minor sonata is notable for the esprit and accuracy of his fugue. Recording in both instances is excellent, the Columbia being especially distinct.
Brahms: "Gestillte Sehnsucht," "Geistliches Wiegenlied," etc. Nell Rankin, mezzo, with Carlton Cooley, viola, and Coenraad V. Bos, piano. Capitol P-8289, $3.98.	In the repertory in which Cooley is the excellent violist, Rankin sings with admirable vocal quality and a reasonable command of the sense of the material involved. However the overside "Vier Ernste Gesaenge" is too much for her, expressively, and even the technical detail does not come off with suitable accuracy, especially in respect to intonation. Good reproduction.
Britten: "The Sally Gardens," etc. Peter Pears, tenor, with the composer at the piano. London LD-9136, $2.98.	The Pears voice is not what it once was—one wonders if it ever really was—but he gives fine interpretative values to this song and such others of the set as "Sweet Polly Oliver," "The Miller of Dee," etc. Some, obviously, are for the English market only, but the attractions, as a lot, are sizeable. Fine sound.
Castelnuovo-Tedesco: "Capriccio Diabolico," etc. Andrés Segovia, guitar. Decca DL-9733, $3.98.	A creation for Segovia in the Paganini tradition, played with a light disregard for difficulties, superb tone, and the most engaging artistry. The disc also contains six preludes by Ponce, a suite by Tansman, and several smaller items, all performed in sovereign style. Particularly good reproduction of the guitar.
Dvorak: "Biblical Songs," "Gypsy Songs" (op. 55), and "Liebeslieder" (op. 83). Hildegard Roessel-Majdan, mezzo, with Franz Holetschek, piano. Westminster WL-5324, $5.95.	The challenges of the "Biblical Songs" are met by Roessel-Majdan with earnest musicianship and good vocal quality, but not the kind of interpretive animation desired. That quality is even more conspicuously absent in the "Gypsy Songs." It is all too quietly conceived for proper effect on the listener.
Gounod: "Venise," "Au Rossignol," etc. Suzanne Danco, soprano, with Guido Agosto, paino. London LD-9144, $2.98.	Unusual literature (the other side is devoted to songs of Bellini) and very well suited to the pretty quality of Danco's voice, without taxing its color range or expressive expanse. Guido Agosti plays the accompaniments ably, and the whole is very well reproduced.
Massenet: "Vision fugitive" ("Herodiade"), etc. John Charles Thomas, baritone, with orchestra. Camden CAL-199, $1.98.	An astonishing collection of vocal *tours de force,* some previously issued, some not, and all enhanced by modern methods to a richness of sound not heard originally. Withal, Thomas's vocal line, phrasing, and continuity of sound in Verdi ("Credo" from "Otello," "Di Provenza," etc.), Giordano ("Nemico della patria" from "Andrea Chenier"), and Wagner ("Evening Star") are something rarely matched. Also included are some robust examples of operetta singing in which Thomas is unsurpassable. Decidedly a bargain, and an educational one, too.
Mompou: Piano Pieces, The composer performing. Angel 35147, $5.95.	There is much charm if not a great deal of range in this assortment of pieces by a composer best known through Novaes. A more detailed comment will follow.
Puccini: "In quelle trine morbide" ("Manon Lessaut"), etc. Maria Callas, soprano, with Tullio Serafin, conducting the Philharmonia Orchestra. Angel 35195, $5.95.	When she arrives at a succession of "Turandot" excerpts Miss Callas finally encounters vocal matter challenging enough for her unique abilities to assert themselves. In the more conventional excerpts from "Manon Lescaut," "Boheme," "Butterfly," etc., the deliveries are much too audibly painstaking and dramatically mannered to suit the very human, uncalculated emotions of Puccini's heroines. Serafin's direction of the orchestral scores is very obliging. When they started out he was boss; but, apparently, no more.
Senallié: Sonata No. 5 in G minor, etc. Carl Dolmetsch, recorder, with Joseph Saxby, harpsichord. London LL-1026, $3.98.	As played here in a miscellany of works by Telemam (Partita No. 2), Pepusch (Sonata No. 4), and Handel (Sonata No. 7 in C), the recorder is certainly a more respectably-sounding instrument than in most instances. However, the young Dolmetsch's command of its technical problems do not greatly enhance its limitations of color, timbre, and dynamic contrast. All the works, in my estimate, would sound better on a flute. Very keen reproduction of both instruments.
Tchaikovsky: Sonata in G, Romance in F minor, "Souvenir de Hapsal," etc. Nadia Reisenberg, piano. Westminster WL-5330, $5.95.	The Schumannesque Sonata has some absorbing musicological aspects, but not so many musical ones. Nadia Reisenberg gives its potential appeal every advantage in recreation, but the substance of life is just not there. The shorter pieces are more enjoyable, and very persuasively played. Clear, somewhat dull, reproduction.
Verdi: "La donna e mobile," etc. John McCormack, tenor. Allegro 1555, $1.89.	This labored rendition of McCormack's earliest recording session (and its far from sparkling companion-versions of "Celeste Aida," "E Lucevan le Stelle," "Che Gelida Manina," etc.) has been pilfered from some unauthorized source, and with no notable exhibition of artistic conscience in the reprocessing. All it proves, essentially, is that even the great McCormack had to learn to sing, for these performances, if occasionally charming in their naivete, are far from his later standard.
Weber: Six sonatas, op. 10. Ruggiero Ricci, violin, and Carlo Bussotti, piano. London LL-1006, $3.98.	Had Weber produced nothing better than these "sonatas" of 1810 (when he was twenty-four), his name would mean nothing to us today. Though Beethoven was on the verge of producing his last violin sonata (op. 96) at this time, these works lack any comparable scope or musical aspiration. Ricci does his work with fine spirit and excellent instrumental discipline, likewise Bussotti, and the mechanical work is first class. However, the contribution of Weber, except in isolated movements, is unworthy of the effort expended. —IRVING KOLODIN.

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Three-Penny

Continued from page 43

the sound has been re-equalized and echo-chambered; the pressings are identical with ordinary Victor Gruve-Gards. Even so they can be called "high fidelity" ("Plus Fidelity" is their word for it) only by a stretch of the ad-man's imagination. They will do yeoman service in medium-fi collections, however, and reproduction easily matches that of regular "Treasury" reissues of similar vintage. One marvels most at the economics of this package; observers may wonder whether everybody's losing money but Tchaikovsky.

Announcing its recording of the Dvorak "Slavonic Dances," Camden coyly suggests, "Although we are not at liberty to reveal the actual name of the orchestra and conductor, we are certain that your memories will soon place the continent and country that impart such verve and vigor to this popular musical fare." My memory does serve me—I've heard snappier versions, but none more idiomatic, for this turns out to be the old Czech Philharmonic recording, under Vaclav Talich. Iron Curtains being what they are, I fail to understand why Camden couldn't call a spade a spade in this case.

Incognitos, evidently, are required principally of orchestras and conductors. On two of the Extended Play 45s I heard (listing for sixty-nine cents each), Khatchaturian's "Gayne" and Handel's "Water Music" are played by a "Century" Symphony (the Twentieth Century Limited has a terminus in the city this orchestra serves.) Solo artists, however, appear as themselves. John Charles Thomas sings such jewels of the American repertoire as "Trees" and "The Bluebird of Happiness"; Marjorie Lawrence, also undisguised, soars and scoops her way through four lieder by Strauss and Pfitzner, mainly *agitato;* and there's the polished authority of E. Robert Schmitz in Debussy's "Suite Bergamasque." The Camden list will bear watching for just such reprints as this piano disc. As they dig deeper into Victor's stock of deletions, a veritable bargain treasury may come to light—one man's cut-rate record can easily be another man's collectors' item.

HOW MANY DIAMONDS?: Interest in this problem, posed in recent LETTERS TO THE RECORDINGS EDITOR, has outrun all expectations, meaning that a judgment on the best response is still pending. The matter will be resolved in *SR* Feb. 26.

DECCA Playbacks

If anybody is credited with the discovery of stereophonic sound, it should be Ethel Merman, whose ability to dislocate a rafter or make a foundation shake from sheer lung power has yet to be matched. Miss Merman's frank, personal account of her incredible pipes and their tumultuous career: *That's The Kind of Girl I Am,* will start in the February 12 Saturday Evening Post. Her most recent Decca album is the sound track of Irving

Berlin's great *There's No Business Like Show Business* (DL 8091—ED 828—DAU 957) with Donald O'Connor, Dan Dailey, Johnnie Ray, Mitzi Gaynor and Dolores Gray. And in the Post article, you'll read about the Ford Anniversary Show Duet with Mary Martin, unforgettably recorded on the spot by Decca (DL 7027—ED 593) . . . also Miss Merman's reminiscences of *Call Me Madam* (DL 5465—ED 508) and *Annie Get Your Gun* (DL 8001—ED 805). These and many more great albums represent a long, exclusive and delightful Decca association with one of the all-time great showgirls.

"Astonishing" is the word applied by the august New York Times in appraising the new Decca offering of the works of Juan Chrisostome de Arriaga, the "Spanish Mozart" who lived to be only twenty years old. The performance by the Orquesta Nacional de Madrid featuring Maria Ripollés, soprano, was recorded in Spain in high fidelity (DL 9756). Terming the "musical invention easy and spontaneous," the Times comments: ". . . it is fascinating to speculate on what [Arriaga] might have accomplished had he lived even to Mozart's age."

The world-famous clarinetist Reginald Kell has just recorded Milhaud's *Suite for Violin, Clarinet and Piano* and Bartók's *Contrasts,* for Decca, with Melvin Ritter, violin, and Joel Rosen, piano (DL 9740). Critics have hailed it "a smooth job," with "excellent recorded sound." If you've *never* heard Kell, you'll hear the clarinet as you've never heard it before.

Perhaps you've been fortunate enough by this writing to have heard one or the other of the new David Oistrakh recordings, Brahms' *Concerto in D Major* Op. 77 (DL 9754) or Tchaikovsky's *Concerto in D Major* Op. 35 (DL 9755). If you *haven't,* make it a point, because at last one of the world's foremost violinists is presented in the kind of high fidelity that does justice to his artistry.

A conductor's gift for interpretation shines most brilliantly when he is confronted by music of many moods and subtleties, as in Bartók's *Two Portraits* and *Divertimento for Strings.* Decca's new high fidelity recording of these works by the versatile Ferenc Fricsay and the RIAS Symphony (DL 9748), inspired one noted critic to say: "Fricsay's sympathy for the works . . . is a positive factor in the results, especially in the first, more moody of the 'Portraits', which has rarely sounded as well. The performance is . . . first class, likewise the reproduced sound."

The indefatigable José Greco dance troupe should be *somewhere* in your neighborhood before May. The famous company, which has been marathoning around the country for months, has two enormously exciting new sets on Decca, *Danzas Flamencas* (DL 9758) and *José Greco Ballet* (DL 9757). The hand-clapping and heelbeats are re-created in a fidelity so superb that the dancers are virtually in the room with you.

With the bestowal of the New York Music Critics' Award for the best choral work of 1954, it's now official that Carl Orff's *Carmina Burana,* the contemporary German composer's rousing settings for some Rabelaisian 13th Century secular poems, is one of the most refreshing and original works in modern musical literature. We're especially pleased with the choice, for Decca actually started the whole thing with the superb recording of *Carmina* by the Bavarian Radio Chorus, Soloists, and Orchestra (DL 9706).

Incidentally, the best psychology for luring children *away* from the TV set long enough for *you* to catch a show is to use one of the Decca Children's sets based on the most popular children's TV shows. For the little children, there's *Winky Dink and You* (K-143-44 or 1-296-97), with Jack Barry. Or if they've reached the blood and thunder age try *Space Patrol Adventures* (K-134-35 or 1-280-81) or *Adventures of the Lone Ranger* (K-140 or 1-293).

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Bach—Motor or Baroque

By PUTNAM ALDRICH

IN ACCORDANCE with the current vogue for completeness, Westminster has issued an album containing all the music that Bach wrote, or may possibly have written, for the solo flute (WAL-216. $11.90). Included are: three sonatas for flute and obbligato harpsichord; a fourth in G minor, of doubtful authenticity, for the same medium; the three Sonatas for flute and thoroughbass; and finally a dubious piece of which only the flute part survives, here presented as a Sonata for Unaccompanied Flute. In all but the last composition John Wummer, the flutist, is joined by harpsichordist Fernando Valenti.

Both performers are accomplished artists and masters of their respective instruments. The mechanical factors of reproduction are excellent—quite up to the standards of high-fidelity. Thanks to the clean-cut tone of the harpsichord, nicely balanced with the contrasting sonority of the flute, the linear aspect of Bach's music is clearly projected. This clarity is especially welcome in the first set of Sonatas, for these pieces are really Trios, in the Baroque sense of the word; they are written for three equal and independent voices, two of which are to be played on the harpsichord, the third on the flute. With these recordings the listener can easily follow the intricate patterns of Bach's counterpoint; he can verify, if he likes, the extreme accuracy with which the players execute the notes printed in the Bach-Gesellschaft edition. There is no exhibitionism here. Wummer and Valenti are obviously intent upon presenting the music as lucidly as possible, avoiding all exaggeration and extravagance, all intrusion of their own personalities between Bach and the listener.

Yet, paradoxically, this respect for the score may itself be a form of intrusion—an intrusion of the spirit of our times into the music of Bach. For the total effect produced by this scrupulous and accurate rendering turns out to be decidedly motoristic. If one's attention wavers momentarily, it gets caught up in the hypnotic regularity of the movement. One thinks of a smoothly running machine or of a well-ordered assembly line, wherein each part falls into place at a predetermined moment. It occurs to one that such music is peculiarly appropriate to our scientific age. Yet it was written 235 years ago, in the Baroque era; and Baroque art is noted for its spontaneous outbursts, its propensity for the fantastic, the unexpected, and the excessively elaborate. Can Bach be a Baroque composer and still have produced this regular, motoristic music? Or do performers like Wummer and Valenti in some way misrepresent his intentions?

These questions can only be answered by inquiring into what Bach and other Baroque composers intended their music to express or to communicate to the listener. Fortunately, we have abundant information on this subject; the writers and musicians of the period were quite articulate about their aims and ideals. The musical symbolism of the Baroque was based upon an aesthetic principle known as the doctrine of the "affections"—a term that referred not only to emotions like joy and sorrow but also to states of mind such as tranquility or agitation. The aim of music was to present the "states of the human soul" by means of certain musical figures that were supposed to correspond to specific affections. These originated early in the seventeenth century in the works of composers such as Caccini, Monteverdi, Frescobaldi, and Schütz, but were later classified and became the common property of all musicians. They are the raw materials of Baroque style. Whereas in the early Baroque the affections changed frequently—following the emotions implied by the text, or even the spontaneous fancy of the composer—the ideal of unity in the late Baroque required that a single piece or movement be devoted exclusively to a single basic affection.

Bach's extraordinary technical mastery and his delight in elaboration (another Baroque characteristic!) led him to carry each musical process to its extreme limit. He applied the doctrine of the affections more consistently and more systematically than did any other composer. His elaboration of distinct rhythmic figures in individual voices throughout the whole texture often gives rise to a sort of atomic basis in the form of a continuous succession of fast-moving notes. When such passages (and they include a goodly portion of his entire works) are executed in precisely accurate note-values and in a strict tempo, a machine-like motion is set up which obliterates the accents and

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climaxes of the individual figures.

Needless to say, we shall never know *exactly* how Bach wanted his music to be performed. But we do know, from his own statements and those of his contemporaries, that he had no intention of departing from the musical language of his period. The motives he used are similar to those which arose as the spontaneous outbursts of earlier composers; he merely expanded their possibilities. It seems more than likely, therefore, that he would have wished each basic affection to be sharply individualized. This can be done only when the performer uses the score as a point of departure instead of following it slavishly. The Baroque performer actively participated in the creation of the music. Traditions and codes, as much as the printed notes, governed his interpretation of musical figures. A characteristic rhythmic pattern was made to stand out by holding a certain note a little longer than its mathematically specified duration. An eighth note was not necessarily the same length as all other eighth notes. Ornaments were to be inserted according to context, whether indicated or not. A trill on the penultimate note of a cadence heightened melodic activity and at the same time relaxed the tempo.

All such procedures, if introduced into a modern performance, would conspire to break down the motoristic effect of Bach's atomic substratum. They would also entail, of course, a great deal more trouble in the preparation for a recording session. It might take even fine artists like Valenti and Wummer as long to discover the appropriate expression for the basic affections of a single sonata as it takes them to prepare a whole set by the present method.

People seem to like Bach's music tolerably well as it is customarily played—in the modern "perpetual motion" style. Indeed, it may be due to this same motoristic quality that Bach has a greater appeal today than have Monteverdi, Frescobaldi, or Schütz, who were much less systematic in their elaboration and whose music, consequently, cannot be translated into this idiom. On the other hand, the music of Bach has survived through all sorts of vicissitudes, and it is unlikely that the rediscovery of new old qualities in it, through the resurrection of old codes of performance, would cause it to be relegated to limbo. But these are problems that every performer must decide for himself. At this point it is doubtless more just to congratulate Mr. Valenti and Mr. Wummer for what they have done, and done well, than to criticize them for what they have not done and probably never intended to do.

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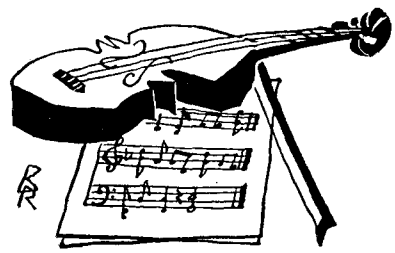

On Singing Debussy

By HERBERT WEINSTOCK

Just as managers, directors, and singers mostly have lost the style and manner essential to the true performance of nineteenth- and twentieth-century French opera (and have thus brought much of it into undeserved disrepute), so today many excellent singers of other repertoires have no idea of how to sing modern French songs. (They could, incidentally, steal most of the idea back, if they were so minded, from the best French singers of café and review chansons.) Reviewing a Maggie Teyte recital in 1945, Virgil Thomson wrote: "That style is based technically on being able to sing any vowel in any color and at any degree of loudness or softness on any note of one's voice. It is based interpretatively on reading aloud." No other technique will do, either, not that for Bach or Handel, not that for Schuman nor Brahms or Strauss. The styles required for Verdi and Wagner and Mussorgsky will do even less. Among non-French singers, Mary Garden and Maggie Teyte have known the modern French style; such French singers as Charles Panzéra, Ninon Vallin, Pierre Bernac, and Gérard Souzay have perpetuated it naturally. Singing Duparc and Fauré and Hahn and Debussy without it is about equivalent to treating Thaïs or Mélisande as though she were erring daughter to either Wotan or Herodias.

These thoughts were stirred up by two well-conceived, musicianly, and well-recorded discs of Debussy songs. On London LD-9146 ($2.98), Suzanne Danco, accompanied by Guido Agosti, sings the first series of "Fêtes galantes" and the "Trois Ballades de François Villon." Danco has a superb recording voice; her musical instincts are admirable, if a little too ladylike; her French is only slightly Swiss. But her singing of Debussy is so utterly innocent of the proper technique and spirit that the result is a very distant approximation to his greatness. She does not realize that

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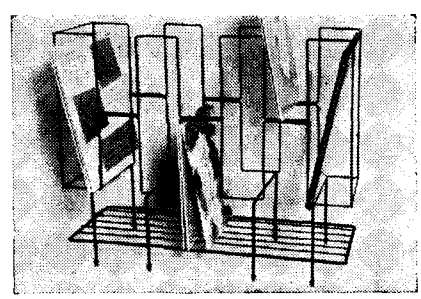

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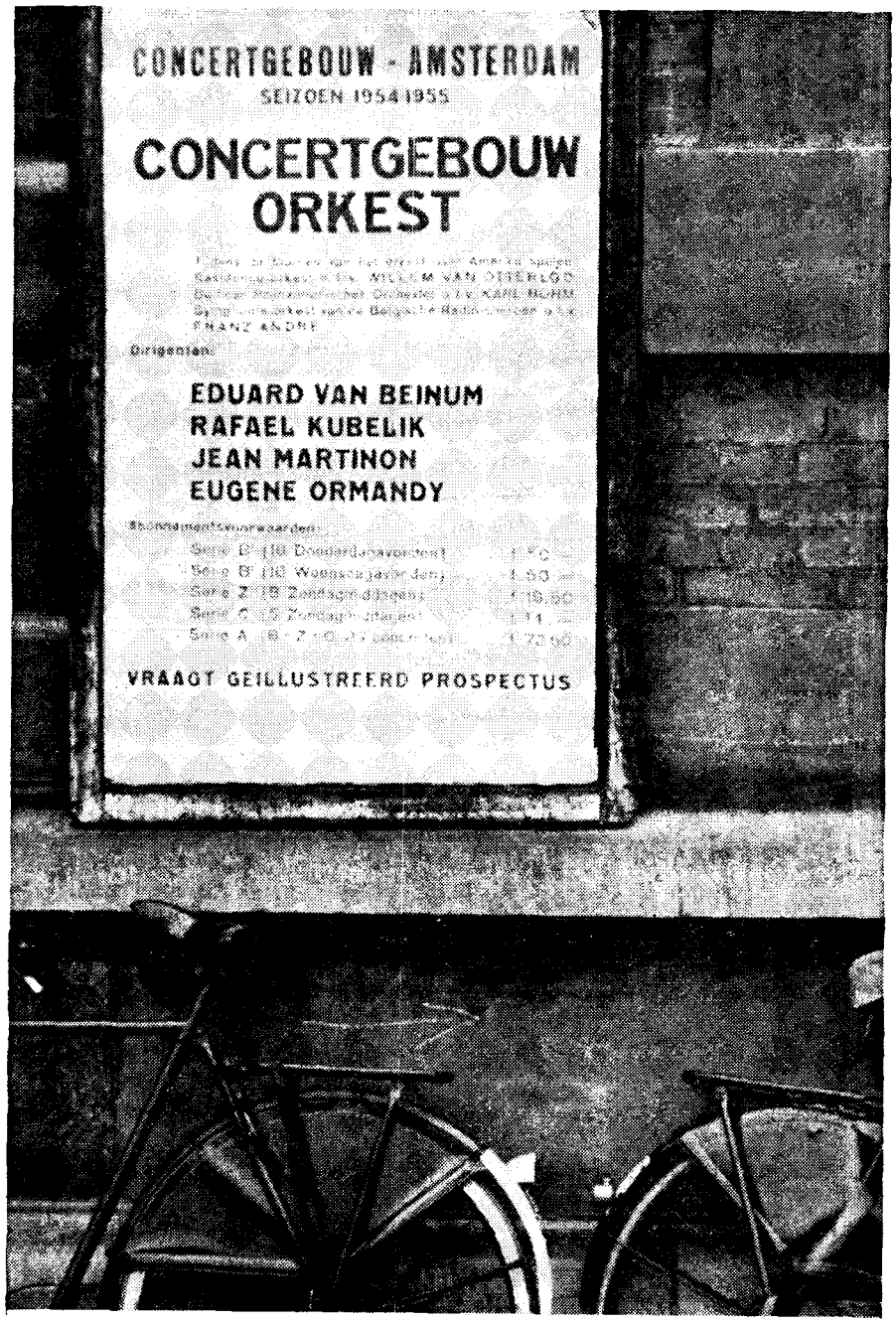
each Debussy song is a drama so private that the listener must be made to feel half *voyeur,* half eavesdropper. She is best, perhaps, in the swashbuckling, rapid "Ballade des femmes de Paris," worst in the intensely Verlainesque "Clair de lune."

On the other record (Haydn Society, HSL-106, $5.95), Flore Wend, accompanied by Odette Gartenlaub, sings the "Proses lyriques," "Chansons de Bilitis," and "Trois Ballades de François Villon." Mlle. Wend has been heard earlier on recordings conducted by Nadia Boulanger, and seems to have acquired some of Boulanger's insight into the relation between history and manner. She tries, she tries womanfully, to sing Debussy as he should be sung. But she labors against a voice with little sensuous charm, a limitation that tends to defeat her enlightened aim. Nonetheless, she comes closer than Danco to bringing Debussy's songs to full life.

If we had not recently heard Bernac and Souzay and, above all others, Maggie Teyte, we should perforce have to be more grateful to Mlles. Danco and Wend. We must still turn to older, acoustically less *trompe l'oreille* recordings when we want to recall the magic that can be drawn from the songs of Debussy. Our luck is that Teyte can still be heard wonderfully singing the "Fêtes galantes" (both series, with vintage Cortot), "Chansons de Bilitis," "Proses lyriques," and "Le Promenois de deux amants." What her treatment of "Colloque sentimental," "De soir," or—above all—"La Chevelure" can teach us is what the great singing of great modern French songs must be. I am inclined to think that Maggie Teyte's best achievements on the Victor, HMV, and Gramophone Shop labels would be the last vocal records with which I should willingly part.

"Our luck is that Teyte can still be heard."



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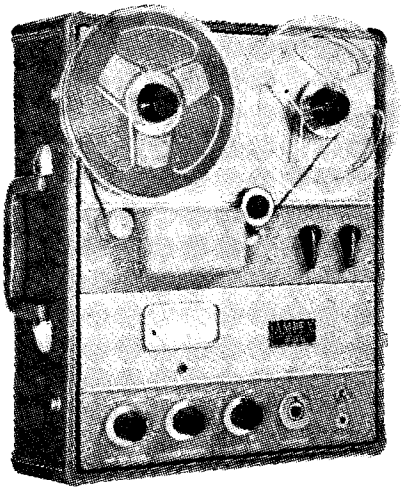

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Italian Opera from Italy

By PAUL HUME

A REAL Verdi opera fan living 100 years ago would be right in the midst of a constantly growing enthusiasm for the melodies of the 1851 "Rigoletto," and the 1853 "Traviata." And it would be another thirty-two years, come February 5, before he would hear the Scala premiere of "Otello." Today London records bring to light the sixth complete "Rigoletto," the sixth and best "Traviata" so far, and the third "Otello."

Taking them in order of their greatness as works of art, we may begin with the impressive successes of the new "Otello." Give the roles of Desdemona, Otello, and Iago into the hands of Renata Tebaldi, Mario del Monaco, and Aldo Protti, and you have the foundation of a performance of certain predictable elements. Tebaldi is by voice and imagination, by that intangible we call temperament, an ideal Desdemona. She never departs from a standard of song illuminated by an intelligence and vocal command of scintillant splendor.

But there is always Signor del Monaco. Vocally he could be magnificent, and sometimes he is. The opening "Esultate!" rings with the real fire. And so do the lines of the duet with Iago that close Act Two. But the Otello of "Dio! mi potevi scagliar," and of the whole scene with Desdemona opening Act Three, is of an unimaginative reading that makes the fine voice mean little. Even more lacking in attention to the greatness of Verdi is the manner of his handling the big scene with the Venetian ambassadors. The asides to Desdemona should be read without becoming episodic. Del Monaco is not yet ready to bring the true Moor to the stage, nor has his work grown in the years we have known him. Intellectual perception is not easily taken on.

Protti is a virtuoso Iago, encompassing the moods of the role well, and singing his recorded best. Ably filled out with Fernando Corena, Luisa Ribacchi, and others, the set, played by the St. Cecelia Academy Orchestra, with their chorus as well, is conducted by Alberto Erede, who drives it well, gives it breathing space where needed, but lacks in the climaxes, the true motility of the Toscanini set. The sound is even and brilliant. For the best "Otello," you must take from each recording.

Francesco Molinari-Pradelli leads a Tebaldi-Poggi-Protti "Traviata" in which the honors again go to the soprano and baritone. If we could have an opera company boasting both Tebaldi and Callas at one time we would think the great days of Italian opera had returned in full measure. Tebaldi's voice is seductive as Violetta, languishing in the "Addio," moving in her reading of Giorgio Germon't letter, and brightly filled with eagerness in the opening scene. She likes a slightly modified pace for "Sempre Libera," but makes her points well as she travels its glittering path. Protti is thoroughly capable as Germont, which only makes the role the bearable bore it usually is. But that is something. Poggi's voice stands as a disaffecting organ in quality, used with no imagination—only sturdiness. And who is going to give us, in these days of "complete" operas, the full measure of "De' miei bollenti spiriti?" It has a *cabaletta* you know, boys. That this is the best "Traviata" on records, even against the radio-quick Toscanini set, does not mean that it could not be considerably better. But that it will be surpassed is problematic.

The "Rigoletto" offers Hilde Gueden's unsensuous and sometimes strained Gilda. Why should a soprano who has problems at the top of the voice add a high E Verdi never wrote, in place of a rare trill, at the close of "Caro Nome"? Gueden has often sung the role at the Met, and she certainly knows her Verdi. It is, simply, a sound that leaves me cold. Del Monaco makes heavy labor of his first aria, dull routine of the last one, and little distinction about what comes between the two. Indeed, a fine voice is by no means enough to sustain interest in so familiar, and potentially rich a part. Protti is the star of this set, with Cesare Siepi adding a Sparafucle distinguished by every possible nuance and fine phrase. Giulietta Simionato is a rich Maddalena, and Corena a luxurious touch as Monterone. Handsomely cast as far as star names go, the set is parallel in ways, at once, better than, and less rewarding than Victor's set. Erede refuses to let Verdi have his head in in the dramatic moments that spark the score. The total effect is of a good routine performance of "Rigoletto" that one might hear at any one of several prominent opera houses in the world's capitals.

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German Opera from Germany

By ROBERT LAWRENCE

RICHARD STRAUSS, as a composer of operas, has often been credited with a dual personality: the demonic rhapsodist of "Salome," "Elektra," "Die Frau ohne Schatten"; and the tender lyricist of "Rosenkavalier," "Ariadne auf Naxos," "Arabella," and the final portion of "Capriccio." The docile side of Strauss is to the fore this month with the release of recorded music from his four lyrical operas. The performances range from dull to brilliant.

Starting from the bottom up, we have a series of excerpts (London) sung by Lisa Della Casa. She offers "Es gibt ein Reich" from "Ariadne"; the second act duet (together with Paul Schoeffler) from "Arabella"; and the closing scene of "Capriccio." All of these pieces are correctly, but provincially, delivered, with little of the special charm and poetry that are their hallmark. The great aria from "Ariadne" should be sung by a soprano with rich, warm tones who has also at her command, for the sake of dynamic contrast, a floating pianissimo. Time was when this writer little thought he would cite a performance by Maria Jeritza as a vocal model; but those music-lovers who are familiar with her vintage recording of the same aria (Odeon) must surely assent. In the mysterious phrase "Bald aber naht ein Bote, Hermes heissen sie ihn," wherein Ariadne awaits the coming of death and its messenger, Jeritza takes a high B-flat that chimes like a distant silver bell. Miss Della Casa sings this line, as she does most of the others on the recording, with a low degree of color and sensitivity. Her duet with Schoeffler from "Arabella" is better, although here she has trouble vocally with the resounding phrase that forms its climax. The "Capriccio" is adequate. Orchestral support on this double-faced LP, provided by the Vienna Philharmonic under the direction of Heinrich Hollreiser, is on a par with the singing.

Far more satisfying is London's release of the complete "Rosenkavalier." The cast is a good one, the overall musical atmosphere convincing. Those who, like the writer, are more interested in quality of performance than in high fidelity, will still choose the celebrated abridged version of "Rosenkavalier" made some years ago by Richard Mayr, Lotte Lehmann, Maria Olszewska, and Elizabeth Schumann. These artists were unique and, on the evidence of the new recording, irreplaceable. For an ideal glance into the creative world of Strauss, for a knowledge of tradition in the making (Mayr was the first Baron Ochs and Lehmann the greatest Marschallin), for a memorable flash of vocal color—the sumptuous mezzo of Olszewska pitted against the crystalline soprano of Schumann—the old set remains unequalled.

The new edition, however, has solid merits. Its range of sound is impressive, although one wonders why the recording engineers—so intent on expanding both ends of the tonal gamut—should have worked so little for nuance at dead center. There is no real pianissimo. The hushed strings that Strauss scored to accompany the Marschallin's monologue come off with grey, wiry tone. Nevertheless, this is a sturdy performance in which the Vienna Philharmonic, under Erich Kleiber's baton, plays with less virtuosity than might have been expected, but achieves a generally high level.

LUDWIG WEBER, as Baron Ochs, is most commanding among the soloists contributing an amusing, deftly-paced, and well-sung characterization. Of the women, Hilde Gueden fares best in the rôle of Sophie, which neatly fits her voice and talents. Although Sena Jurinac is a renowned Octavian, and is said by those who have seen her in the theatre (the writer is not among them) to be inimitable in the part, she is miscast from a recording point of view, as her high, light soprano is neutralized in its dramatic effectiveness by the similar timbres of Miss Gueden and of Maria Reining as the Marschallin.

The closing trio, notably, suffers from monotony because all three voices are so similar; and throughout the recording Miss Jurinac—who is evidently a superb artist in the rôles that suit her vocally—sounds overweighted by the part of Octavian, most perceptibly in its lower reaches. The impassioned, high-lying climaxes of the first act, such as "Ich will den Tag nicht denken," also do not have

(*Continued on page* 64)

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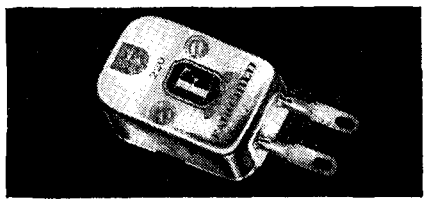

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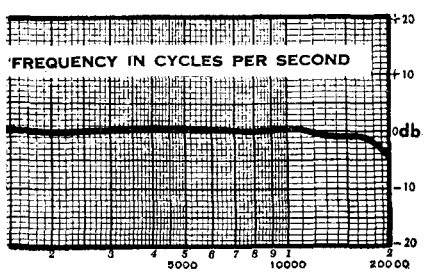

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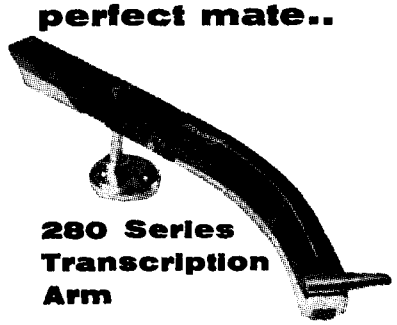

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ONE OF these days the producers of pop records may be running out of surprises. But somehow somebody always manages to uncover that almost forgotten show tune, or an unbelievably superior rendition of a well-roasted chestnut. Often, long-denied sympathetic production will illuminate a side-street performer and we recognize him for the mainliner he has always been. And then there are the new artists, especially in the jazz field where a whole new generation is blossoming. And the new shows. This has been an especially fine month for surprises.

Ellis Larkins, the pianist, has spent the last few years playing cocktail jazz or accompanying singers in East Side clubs. Since he's somewhat of a stranger in the jazz *boites*, his new recording surprised us because it's such great jazz. It's called PERFUME AND RAIN (Storyville LP-316), and Larkins is one of the few who can play swinging, imaginative, and sensitive solo piano without the support of a rhythm section. His style is a refinement of Waller's and Hines's, and he relishes good tunes, playing them in a manner that informs you that he knows the words as well as the chord changes. Two wonderful Arthur Schwartz songs stand out here—"By Myself" and "Then I'll Be Tired of You." There's also a rare Porter "Looking at You," which has been rare too long.

And what is so rare as the verse to a popular song? . . . Still these "appetizers" have proven to be part of the charm of the "complete" show score albums that are sometimes best sellers. And there are nightclub performers who become "sophisticated personalities" simply by learning the verses and extra choruses to sophisticated show tunes, which they interpret usually with blurred diction and poor pitch. I believe Esoteric had a fine idea in making VERSE AND CHORUS (ES-534). Larry Carr, and to a smaller extent Bethe Douglas, are the vocalists, backed by a bright, tune-wise handful of jazz stars including Dick Hyman on piano, Mundell Lowe on guitar, and the heretofore obscure Rusty Dedrick on trumpet. Esoteric promises that Dedrick will not remain obscure and we're grateful, because this fellow sounds like a 1955 model of Berrigan. Carr takes a middle road between the casual Hugh Shannon and the meticulous George Byron. Most important, he doesn't tamper too much with the great material. Miss Douglas is quite charming. Verse and chorus (or choruses) are included for thirteen songs, some of which are "Let's Misbehave" (Porter), "I See Your Face Before Me" (Schwartz-Dietz), "Girls Were Made to Take Care of Boys" (Blane), "Ten Cents a Dance" (Rodgers-Hart), "That Certain Feeling" (The Gershwins), "Island in the West Indies" (Duke-I. Gershwin), and similar worthies. Annotator George Simon (no relation) has provided a brief history of each tune.

I knew Jackie Paris when he was playing guitar, and scat singing on 52nd Street. Now he puts his firm musicianship and warm jazz feeling into his ballads, eight of which comprise THAT "PARIS" MOOD (Coral CRL 56118). He's one of the very best. In this set I especially liked "You're Mine, You" (Johnny Green) and "I'm Thru with Love."

The former Stan Kenton vocalist Chris Connor has taped a new set for Bethlehem (it's an appropriate season for a Bethlehem release!) in which this former "cool jazz" singer emerges as a distaff edition of Jackie Paris. Her LULLABY FOR LOVERS (Beth. BCP-1002) reveals a mature interpreter of tunes and lyrics where previously this darling of the "hip" set eschewed color and feeling and tried to sound like a "progressive" tenor sax. She does "Cottage for Sale" along with the unconventional Billy Strayhorn "Lush Life," and a thoroughly successful up-tempo "Stella by Starlight." Miss Connor is supported eminently by the VINNIE BURKE QUARTET, which has another album to itself (Beth. BCP-1010). This is highly distinctive, though not revolutionary jazz, introducing several brilliant young voices in Burke on string bass (his bass serves as a voice in the ensemble), Ronnie Ordich on clarinet, Don Burns on accordion, and Joe Cinderella on guitar. Oscar Pettiford, in his ensembles, has utilized his bass as a melodic instrument, but Oscar never has been able to produce the clear, singing sound that Burke gets here. Vinnie plays introductions and endings, as well as jazz solos, and has some lovely, sensitive duet figures with the guitar. Burns, like Mat Mathews, manages to get rich, tasteful sound out of that beast of instruments—the accordion, and Ordich, a De Franco disciple, but with a fuller

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tone than the master, is a real comer on clarinet.

The future of jazz looms bright when Bethlehem is able to turn up teen-agers who play like those featured in GREAT SCOTT (Beth. BCP-1004). Seventeen-year old Bobby Scott is the leader, pianist and composer of five of the tunes here, assisted by seventeen-year old Will Bradley Jr., on drums, and "Whitey" Mitchell—who is a ripe old twenty-two on bass. This is the debut disc for both Scott and Bradley. The former impresses here as a Bud Powell follower.

In memory of the recently resuscitated, now deceased Broadway production of ON YOUR TOES, Decca has issued an "original cast" album containing the brilliant Rodgers and Hart score (DEC DL-9015). The book must have been very bad indeed if *these* songs could not sustain it. They're among the more sophisticated works by the greatest of all musical comedy teams, and include such material as "Too Good for the Average Man," "It's Got to be Love," "The Heart is Quicker than the Eye," and such lovelies as "Small Hotel," "Glad to be Unhappy," and the lesser-known "Quiet Night." In this production, "You Took Advantage of Me," from the earlier show "Present Arms," has been interpolated as a vehicle for the first-magnitude talent of Elaine Stritch. Last year Columbia anticipated the revival with its own version of the score (Col ML-4645), with Portia Nelson and Jack Cassidy starred. That set was notable for a certain intimacy, patterned in the charming orchestrations. This new version could be truer to the theatrical nature of the show—brash sometimes, brassy, and insolent. As for the famous "Slaughter on 10th Avenue"—I think I've had it.

The disc production of MRS. PATTERSON (RCA LOC-1017), is a collection of songs and scenes from the new Eartha Kitt vehicle. Its warmhearted whimsy is at times reminiscent of "Finian's Rainbow," and where most show sets serve best as a memento of the show this one should be a most effective advertisement. Eartha Kitt, whether singing or acting, is delectable. Once again the company has let us down in the program note department. You have to look at the label to find out what's going on, which is difficult while the record is playing.

Few singers today can handle a show tune with the intensity and musicianship of a Sinatra. Gershwin's SOMEONE TO WATCH OVER ME has been revived by Frank for his forthcoming film, "Young at Heart," and his version is available on a single Capitol gem (F-2993).

-BILL SIMON.

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Don't Blow!

IT IS virtually certain that the first thing a novice tape recordist will do, after skimming through the instruction book, is to cuddle up close to the microphone and, after blowing experimentally into it, intone "one-two-three-four-five-six . . ."

Now, neither of these procedures does the tape recordist or his equipment any good. I don't know where the blowing into the microphone routine originated—maybe back in carbon microphone days—but it certainly is bad for modern types. Warm, moist breath helps to ruin the ordinary crystal microphone, and a heavy impact of sound may stretch the ribbon of a velocity mike so much that it becomes almost useless.

The other procedure, that of counting up to ten as a combination quality and level check, is of some use in broadcast work, where the constants of the equipment are known. But it is of questionable value to the tyro tape recordist. You cannot judge recording quality by means of your own voice because you don't really *know* what it sounds like. When you speak much of the sound reaches the cochlea, the actual physical hearing mechanism, from the inside, through the bones of the head; the voice you hear when you speak is considerably different from that someone else hears. The thing to do is to begin by recording sound from an outside source, some sound you are able to judge objectively, until you know how to use a microphone. When you reach that stage you will find that you can obtain high-quality tape with almost any mike that is in good repair.

It is much more difficult to record natural-sounding tape than you might expect. A microphone does not hear the way we hear. We hear with two ears, binaurally. One microphone, two, or a hundred microphones, functions as essentially a single ear, if you record on single-track tape for what is called a monaural system. Now, even if you stop up one ear, you get some sense of direction, you can place sounds: in other words, you hear in perspective. The microphone does not pick up sound this way; it cannot impart a sense of perspective, or place sounds. The most a microphone can do is to give a close-in pick-up or a more or less distant pick-up—more or less presence. You may record a group of people talking, for instance, and later try to identify voices and where their owners were situated in the room. You will probably be able to answer the first point but not the second. About the best you will be able to do on the location point is to determine who was close to the microphone, and who was a distance from it, and, very likely, who had the most penetrating voice. Two microphones, if they are placed in the same relative positions as the ears on a human head, and whose output is recorded on two-track tape simultaneously, are fairly good substitutes for your two ears. Listening to a tape recorded in this way on headphones will give you true binaural reception, including the senses of perspective and direction.

A microphone is constructed somewhat like the human ear except that it is nowhere near as well-made. The diaphragm or ribbon of the microphone, and the associated magnetic components, may be roughly compared with the eardrum, hammer, and anvil of the ear. The active parts of a microphone are actuated, according to type, either by the velocity of the sound-driven air particles striking them or by the varying pressures of the sound surrounding the mike.

Sensitive ribbon (velocity) mikes can be ruined by a sudden blast of air or sound. The active mechanical element of this microphone is a ribbon of very light, crimped metal stretched precisely between two permanent magnets. The ribbon is so delicate and light that a repairman, when replacing a "blown" ribbon, has to breathe with his head turned aside to avoid stretching it.

Crystal microphones (the kind usually furnished when you buy a low-priced tape recorder) consist of small piezo-electric crystal plates which are made to twist by the pressure of sound against a diaphragm coupled to them. The twisting of these crystals causes them to generate electrical currents which vary with the sound.

Dynamic microphones are made in many varieties, sizes, and impedances. They respond to sound pressure and are normally sturdier and less easily damaged than other kinds. They are made like little loudspeakers. (In an emergency, a small permanent-magnet loudspeaker makes a usable but insensitive microphone.) There is a stretched diaphragm, made of metal or plastic, which is moved by varying sound pressures. It transmits this motion to a coil which, moving in a magnetic field, causes electrical cur-

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rents corresponding to the actuating sound to be generated.

The new condenser microphones are the best available today; I shall not tell you about them, however, because they are far too expensive for the beginner to play with.

Don't talk too close to the microphone or place it right smack against the piano or other musical instrument when recording music. (An exception: the *contact* microphone, a type actuated by direct contact with the sound producer. For instance, you might call a phonograph pick-up a contact microphone.) For speech you should be from eight to twenty inches from the microphone, or even farther away, depending upon the effect you want.

"How do I avoid distortion?" is something the amateur often asks. You cannot avoid a certain amount of distortion—no recording method is perfect. But you can avoid the most common cause of distortion on tape by good mike placement (experiment!) and by *not overloading* the tape. Don't try to make that eye-tube indicator close on every peak of sound! Find out by experiment how much of an indication on your own "record level" indicator, whether it be an eye-tube or a meter, gives you the optimum clarity in play-back from the tape, and then adjust the record level control so as never to exceed that point. Most of the distortion on tape that I have heard has been due to these two causes: 1) the microphone too close to the sound source, and 2) too much recording level, overloading either the record amplifier or the tape itself. There are other causes of distortion, but none that can so easily be avoided. Incidentally, don't touch mike or cable while recording; use a shock-insulated stand.

I have had tapers ask me, "How do you extend a crystal microphone cable?" The answer is it can easily be done by using a shielded extension cable that you can make, have made, or buy ready-made. But I hesitate to recommend extending a crystal-mike cable more than twenty-five feet. This is because the ordinary crystal mike is a high impedance device, which means that the cable is at almost the same point of sensitivity as the extremely sensitive grid of the first amplier tube in your recording amplifier. If the mike cable is made too long, it causes a loss in the quantity (and perhaps quality) of sound delivered to the recorder. Also, you are more likely to pick up hum which may be induced in the mike cable from ac wires—and, if conditions are right, you may record FM or TV sound, whose radio frequencies are picked up by the long sensitive cable and rectified by the first amplifier tube, acting as a detector.

If you require a long microphone extension the best solution is to buy an inexpensive (or expensive) low impedance microphone, and a cable transformer that transforms the low impedance of the microphone to the high impedance required by most home recorders. Of course, if your recorder already has a low impedance jack you save the cost of the cable transformer. Don't forget that for best results you plug the cable transformer into the recorder jack, so that the long extension cable is at low impedance. The cable is not as sensitive or frequency-discriminating used in this way and you can extend it for several hundred feet without noticeable loss. Employ low-capacity shielded cable for long extensions, although in emergencies two ordinary parallel wires will perform remarkably well. But do not use thin, high-capacity, shielded wire for extensions. They are apt to cause loss of high frequencies.

A last, personal word about microphones: I prefer a low impedance dynamic job because it is rugged, requires the least care, is easy to use, and will survive a hard jolt occasionally. If you use a crystal mike, remember, keep it dry. —JOEL TALL.

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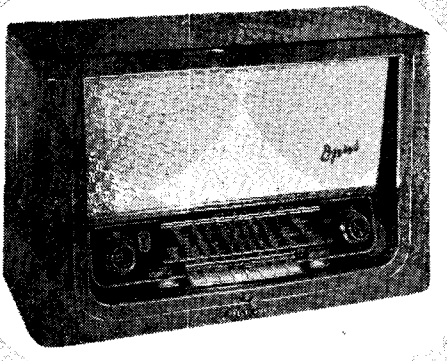

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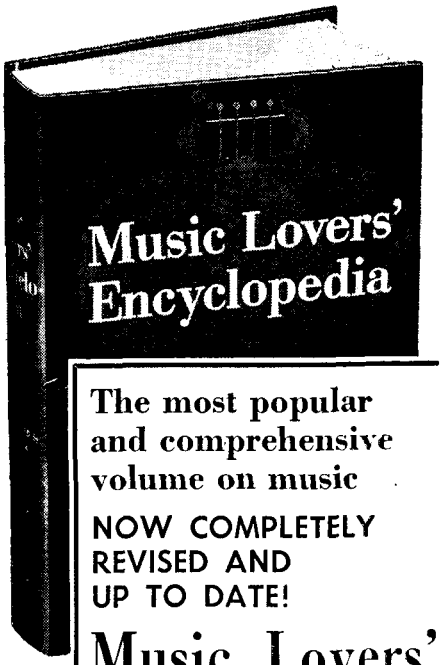

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West Coast Market News

LOS ANGELES.

LOS ANGELES'S wide-flung environs are popularly held to blame for the reluctance of its citizens to leave their hearths in pursuit of music. But whatever the reasons, the 450 square miles that make up Greater Los Angeles have yielded during the last few years a bumper harvest of record collectors and hi-fi fans who prefer to take their listening dividends in comfort by the fireside.

Any change in the status quo of the recording industry has an unsettling effect on these, as became clear in 1948 when the change-over to long-playing discs split the industry into two sonic poles, one revolving at 33⅓-rpm, the other at 45. The reaction of most record collectors at that time was one of watchful waiting to see which speed became the accepted one before investing in either. Meanwhile dealers, caught with a stock of old 78s which no one wanted and uncertain as to which new speed to endorse, marked time until playing equipment for all three made its appearance and the record collector gingerly, but with increasing confidence, returned to his favorite exercise of fingering through the record racks.

This month local dealers, along with those throughout the country, have faced not only another period of marking time until the market settles, but the more depressing necessity of marking down their current inventories by more than 30 per cent. Since this amounts roughly to their margin of profit from stocks on hand, not a few feel that while the price cut enforced on them by RCA's sudden, unilateral action may serve to increase their volume sales for 1955, the new year has certainly come in like a lion, devouring a substantial part of their profits from 1954.

During January the customer in search of new releases has been less apt to find them, since local dealers, most of whom had stocked up heavily at the old prices for the Christmas trade, have been waiting to see whether or how soon all of the manufacturers will go along with the price cuts concurred in by the major companies. The fear that the new price level may put some of the smaller, quality companies out of business also leaves the dealer hesitant to invest heavily in their product at the moment.

This uncertainty has communicated itself to the consumer, who is also waiting to see which way the wind blows. Record buyers have reacted in a variety of ways. Whereas dealers, recalling the factional war that plummeted sales in 1948, feel doubly aggrieved at having had to learn of RCA's latest intentions through the newspapers, the record buyer views the situation with the wary eye of one confident it can be worked to his advantage, but only if he plays it smart.

Many customers refuse to believe the new move is anything more than just another sale "like that of last February." These are taking advantage of the moment to stock their own shelves with items they feel they could not otherwise have afforded. Others suspect that the major companies have plans they are not telling even the newspapers, and these prefer to hold off buying until the crystal ball becomes less murky. One man of this persuasion advised his favorite dealer: "I'm not buying any merchandise that's likely to become outmoded in a few months. These record companies are just trying to unload their old stock fast, because they're all planning to retool for tape." This is highly improbable.

In the other direction is the customer who declares: "This is certain to develop into another price war. I'm holding off until I see how far competitive cutting may force down the price of the items I want." The dyed-in-the-wool collector, however, is not to be swayed by price considerations. Consensus in this category seems to be: "If there's something I want, I'll buy it without regard to cost." Some apprehension is felt by those who value quality above price, and these incline to the view that "The price cut is OK, but will it affect the quality of recordings, particularly in the case of companies with limited resources which are forced to meet the new competitive levels?" In line with this, it is the privately expressed opinion of certain people close to the production belt that the new wholesale prices are pegged so little above the cost of manufacture and distribution for even the major companies that the present price cut cannot obtain for very long—although long enough, conceivably, to eliminate a number of small competitors.

There is always the customer who is able to tap secret and dubious sources of information, and one such has been

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earnestly exhorting local dealers to liquidate their present stock *pronto*, because, he avers, both RCA and Columbia are reverting next month to the old Hill and Dale method of recording that was used for the early Edison discs. But while local reaction is still too diverse for any clear pattern to emerge insofar as the retail market in Los Angeles is concerned, it seems a foregone conclusion that for Eastern discount houses, the West Coast mail order business is destined to fall off sharply. This has had a mildly cheering effect on local merchants.

—MILDRED NORTON.

FRESH WIND FROM THE NORTH

"THE INVESTIGATOR." *John Drainie, etc.* (Discuriosities. $5.95.)

THE hot breath of McCarthyism is nothing like so intense as it was last spring, but a whiff of what it *was* like is conveyed in this fantasy originally broadcast on the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation's network last May 30. No names are mentioned, no places specified, but the hanging inflection in the Drainie voice, the tired petulance, barely controlled impatience, certainty of indisputable—but very much disputed—righteousness are unmistakable. His remarkable mimicry even triumphs over a well-meant, but not too skilful script by Reuben Ship, a Canadian writer expelled from this country because of Communist affiliations he could not, or would not, disavow.

Whatever the source, "The Investigator" shoots a well-aimed satirical shaft at the windy nonsense to which the nation was exposed in the unforgettable "hearings." According to the present script, "The Investigator" takes off on a plane journey to some important objective, interrupted by an unforeseen occurrence—namely, a fatal accident. He finds himself in a Hereafter which arouses his suspicions and his investigatorial talents, since it affords a strange hospitality to such people as Socrates and Jefferson, Luther and John Milton.

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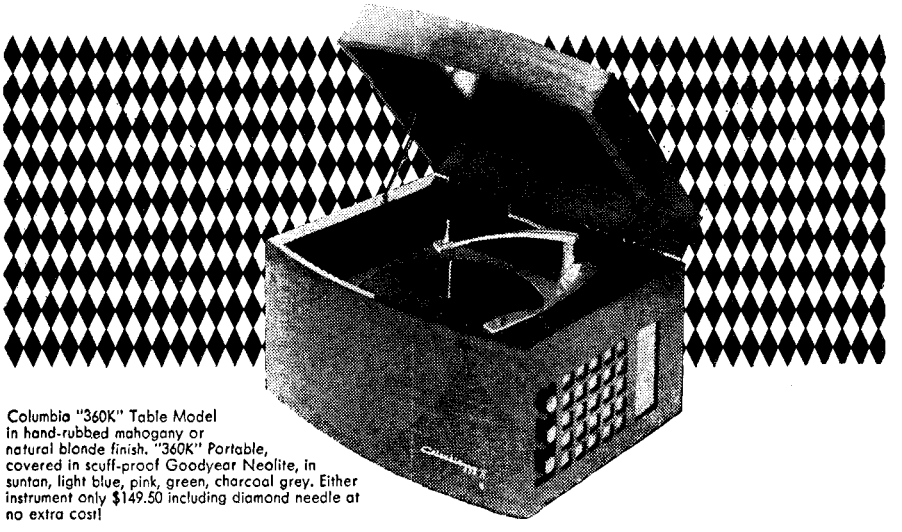

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THE AMEN CORNER

Thoughts on the New

LADIES and gentlemen, friends of jazz, where do we want our music to go from here? A brief inspection of wise literature on the subject of the arts may well convince you that the mere auditor, nay even the professional commentator, has nothing whatsoever to say on the subject of the future. So long as they are genuinely creative (not in the advertising agency sense of the term) the arts proceed fundamentally from what we call the subconscious. The first draft, the preliminary feeling around on the trumpet, comes from the mysterious entrails. Of course it is open to conscious criticism, the performer's and the public's, but criticism looks at the work, and perhaps rearranges it, after the act.

However, we may easily talk about music-making when it is not art but mannerism. In the Twenties there was a horrible word in jazz circles—"noodling." I hated it until I suddenly realized that it was wonderfully and loathesomely appropriate to its purpose. It meant, simply, the facile ability of many Twenties jazz players to fool around, ornamentally, with the notes of the common chords. Today we are faced with the same dull discouragement in the modern sense—the ability of so many "modern jazz" musicians to noodle with the notes of uncommon chords and with passing notes. Inevitably, it would seem, another great age of clichés is upon us. The snoring trombone is out of the modern books, but do not suppose for a moment that the snore-inducing modern stereotype, complete with flatted fifths and so intricate as to require marked technical virtuosity, is not likely to o'erwhelm us all. Give the boys a lot of technique—and most of them have earned it the hard way—and I suppose it is only natural that they should show it off, on records as well as in the studio.

But what we keep hoping for is characterful phrasing carried into sustained melodic interest, the whole feelingly harmonized and rhythmic to boot. That's all. We hope for well-shaped pieces of music, for *form*, improvised or composed, rather than exercises guaranteed to prove that an LP permits anywhere from twenty to twenty-five minutes of noodling, modern or schmodern.

For instance, there is a glowing piece of business by the splendid modern brass team of Miles Davis, trumpet, and J. J. Johnson, trombone, with the tenor saxophone Lucky Thompson and a fastidious rhythm section consisting of Horace Silver, piano; Percey Heath, bass; and Kenny Clarke, drums (Prestige LP-182). This is a jazz band in every sense of the word: personal expression, muscle, irresistible movement, no taint of the paler casts of thought. And while it is largely free-style improvising, in the modern idiom, it is shaped in phrase and sentence and paragraph. Faced with this kind of disc, you realize that the classic-modern jazz compound is no dream.

Then there is that great lady of the jazz piano, Mary Lou Williams (EmArcy MG-26033). She is, with Barbara Carroll, the cream of the cream. Miss Williams is, perhaps, the stronger (in her time she has been pianist-arranger for Andy Kirk's powerhouse colored band); Miss Carroll is, possibly, subtler. But both of them can fill an LP with full-fashioned, subtly turned pieces of music. At the piano also, this month, is Randy Weston, who takes off from tunes by Cole Porter (Riverside RLP-2508). "Off" is the operative word. A man of high inventive discretion and modesty, he uses some of the best Porter themes for variations which, at first, I thought rather fragile but which I now find are a durable, highly-individual pleasure. He is definitely not to be recommended to the aunt who just loves "Night and Day." That alterna-

Mary Lou Williams—"that great lady of the jazz piano."

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tion becomes, in his hands, somewhat crepuscular—but I think Porter would admire Weston-Porter.

Weston safely avoids the modern jazz tendency, widely remarked, toward insipid refinement. For instance, when the Pacific Coast contingent of Chet Baker, trumpet, Bud Shank, alto saxophone, Bob Brookmeyer, valve trombone, and Russ Freeman, piano, get together as they recently have (Pacific PJLP-15), I wish the mass of talent would forego trickling, piddling little themes and go to work on some of the richly flowing material of our popular musical history. Doubtless the boys are more interested in what they do to the tunes than what the tunes are in themselves. Naturally. I simply point out, as I have before, that once a footling melody is set up, it hangs in a musical ear in all its silliness, whether anyone is actually playing it or not. I want no more of this splendid group of musicians inspiring themselves with the theme of "Little Man, You've Had a Busy Day." I hasten to add that there are more rewarding works on the platter.

Mel Powell, pianist of the old Benny Goodman band, has studied with Paul Hindemith at Yale and now teaches at Queens College, Long Island. A swing master, he has now turned modern jazz composer with richly gratifying effects, featuring tenor saxophonist Paul Quinichette (Vanguard VRS-8501) and trumpeter Ruby Braff (Vanguard VRS-8502). I like his modern numbers so much (there are other relatively conservative but appetizing items in both volumes) that I hesitate to mention, again, the threat of overrefinement. But jazz to me basically presupposes a free-wheeling, free-feeling atmosphere in which refinement is of the musical spirit rather than the letter. I'd like to hear Powell's numbers torn off by a competent group, under bacchic power, at 4 a.m. Meanwhile I call attention to a tough little program of modern jazz by drummer Art Blakey and his small combination, who manage to combine recent musical perspectives with a kind of breakdown, barrelhouse ease —good coarse grain (EmArcy MG-26030). —Wilder Hobson.

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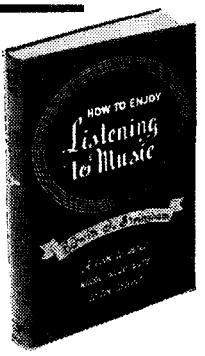

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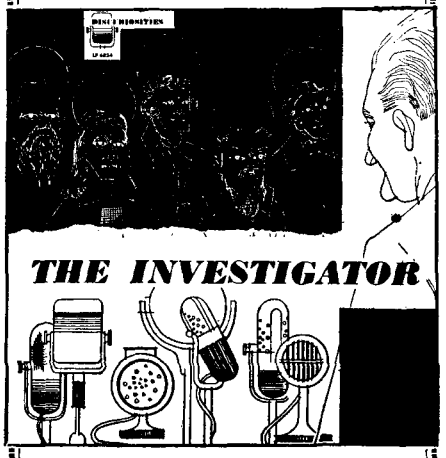

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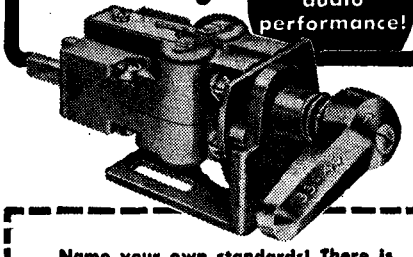

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German Opera

Continued from page 55

the thrust and fire that a great mezzo-soprano (for which the score calls) can bring to the part. This is not so much the fault of Miss Jurinac as of a prevalently relaxed system of casting in today's operatic world. Miss Reining, the Marschallin, is pleasantly routine and sometimes touching, as in her delivery of the trio's vaulting "Hab' mir's gelobt." Anton Dermota sings the music of the Italian tenor with tonal beauty.

Several notches above either of these of these recordings comes the "Great Scenes from Arabella" (Angel). "Arabella" bears somewhat the same relationship to the general output of Strauss as does "La Rondine" to that of Puccini. Both are fragile operas, lyric comedies, and each is at the mercy of its interpreters for viable effect. Much of "Arabella" contains inferior music—especially the ballroom scene with the yodelling Fiakermilli—but this episode is mercifully omitted in the present recording and only the high-spots remain. Indeed this single disc contains—missing only the prelude to Act Three and the following scene between Arabella and Matteo—all of the outstanding pages of the opera. At their best, such as the duet for the two sisters, Arabella's lovely monologue, both scenes between Arabella and Mandryka, they are quite melting; and the waltz-like background which permeates the score is by no means an imitation of "Rosenkavalier." A more intimate and sober era of Viennese history is suggested: the bourgeois city of the mid-nineteenth century.

Elisabeth Schwarzkopf is charming as Arabella, singing graciously and with genuine distinction. Anny Felbermayer contributes a good Szdenka, Nicolai Gedda is an excellent Matteo, and Theodor Schlott an engaging Waldner. In the part of Mandryka—really the protagonist of the opera—Josef Metternich sings with a dash and color that will come as a surprise to those familiar with him only from his New York stage appearances. In the secondary rôle of Lamoral, Walter Berry gives fine vocal promise. The Philharmonia Orchestra is skilfully conducted by Lovro von Matacic; and the album contains, in addition to notes on the opera by Ernst Roth, a cover photograph of the ballroom scene showing the most dynamic of all Mandrykas—Alfred Jerger, who created the part over twenty years ago—in one of his characteristically striking attitudes.

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LETTERS TO THE RECORDINGS EDITOR

ENRICHING THE RICHES

MAY I, WITHOUT in any way discrediting other critics of recorded music, tell you how very delighted I was with the wise and scholarly reviews by Abram Chasins that have appeared recently? They enrich an already rich section of *The Saturday Review.*

HENRY H. STEVENS.
Coconut Grove, Fla.

WHY NOT "WALKÜRE"?

I HAVE NOTICED the letters you have been publishing lately in your record section [Letters, *SR* Dec. 25, 1954] and I agree with the editor that the Ring Cycle as a whole is too long and drawn out to be a good investment for a record company. However, how about "Walküre"? It should not be too difficult to assemble a cast to perform this opera, popular in its own right. Why do we have no more than patchwork LPs on an opera like this?

JOHN G. HINTERSDORF.
Chicago, Ill.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *A Furtwängler-directed "Walkure" may be expected from HMV sometime this year.*

A WAGNER BIAS?

THE ATTITUDE OF Ye Recordings Editor toward the Ring Cycle seems just the least bit tinged with prejudice against the most massive of all operas. Could be you don't see this as a long range cultural project for LPs? Remember 'way when, there were any number of special societies (Mozart Opera Society particularly) that were catering to a comparatively select few, and to time?

KENNETH M. NETT.
New York, N. Y.

RUMORS AND PROMISES

CANNOT RESIST answering editorial comment *re* Emil Kun's Wagner letter. I would like to point out the more or less successfully LP'd editions of "Lohengrin," "Meistersinger," "Parsifal." And most certainly the meticulous studio job in RCA Victor's "Tristan"! You are surely aware that the last three mentioned works are fully as formidable as any given part of the Ring Cycle.

It is fully three years since Urania promised a *complete* Ring Cycle which never materialized. And there have been rumors for the past two years about the possibility of either Columbia or London doing the Ring at Bayreuth, rumors which have found utterance in the pages of *SR.*

ALBERT L. ANDERSON.
Chicago, Ill.

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I SAW THE COMMENT on Mr. Kun's letter. You made a poor choice when you matched "Boris Godounoff" against

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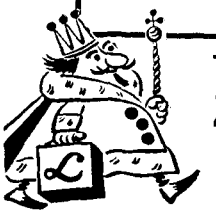

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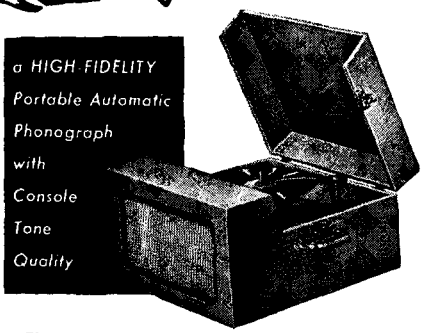

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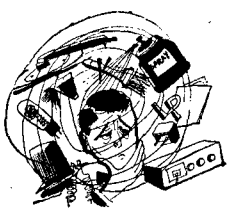

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"Rheingold." Everybody to their own taste, and I've a hunch people who bought the HMV "Boris" would run just as quickly to get as good a version of "Rheingold." There is a certain affinity between the two works. And here's my bid for a complete Ring Cycle to be brought out in 1955.

ART HANSEN.

New York, N. Y.

DOWN WITH OPERA

IN ONE MAN'S opinion, a major contribution of modern record programming is the increased familiarity with much good music hitherto too little known except to specialists.

One hopes that the resultant improvement in public taste will speed the demise of opera, always a mongrel and frequently a hideous art form. Possibly, the answer to Mr. Anderson's plaint about the scarcity of Wagnerian recordings is that their faithful reproduction would be unendurable, and that as a musical nation we have outgrown that sort of stentorian hullabaloo?

CARLTON C. PORTER.

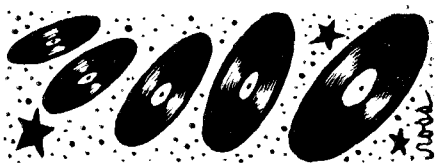
Chicago, Ill.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Wagner's capacity for stirring talk is, obviously, as great as ever.*

THE CRITICISM OF COLORATURAS

IN YOUR REVIEW of the Metropolitan Opera opening [*SR* Nov. 20] you spoke of "Miss Peters's absurdly ornamental 'Una voce poca fa' with its top F."

Why do critics always take pot-shots at coloraturas? How long since a top F is wrong in a coloratura aria? Lily Pons



put it in the Mad Scene from "Lucia" and it became famous. Maybe Donizetti wrote one, and Rossini did not. What does it matter? Are their works sacred?

In days when fine coloraturas can be numbered almost on one hand, let us thank the gods for one who can sing a top F beautifully.

GEORGE SMITH.

Englewood, Col.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *How many diamonds make a tiara? Extra ones can be out of place. Here, too.*

MELBA FOR SALE?

BROWNLEE'S ARTICLE "Melba and I" [*SR* Dec. 25] mentions recordings of Melba's of which she approved. Can you tell me whether any can be obtained at present? I never missed an opportunity to hear her when I could raise the price of admission, and about forty years ago tried to obtain some records. At the time the only one available was "Home Sweet Home."

G. W. BARTELMEZ.

Baltimore, Md.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Some Melba material is available from shops specializing in cut-outs and "old" 78s, but little is presently in print otherwise.*

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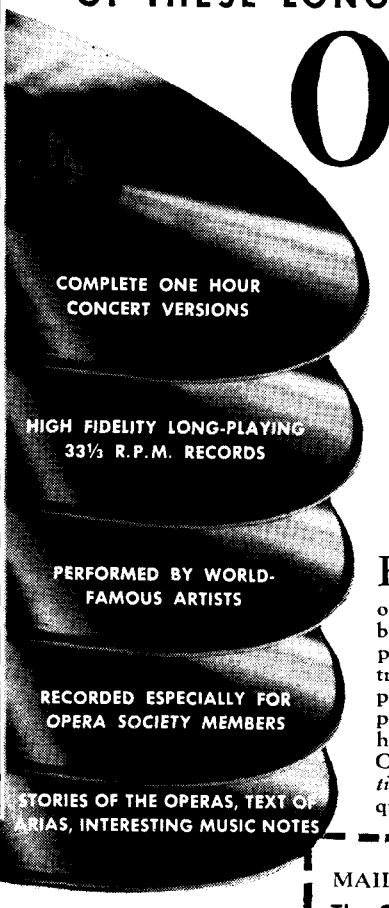
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